

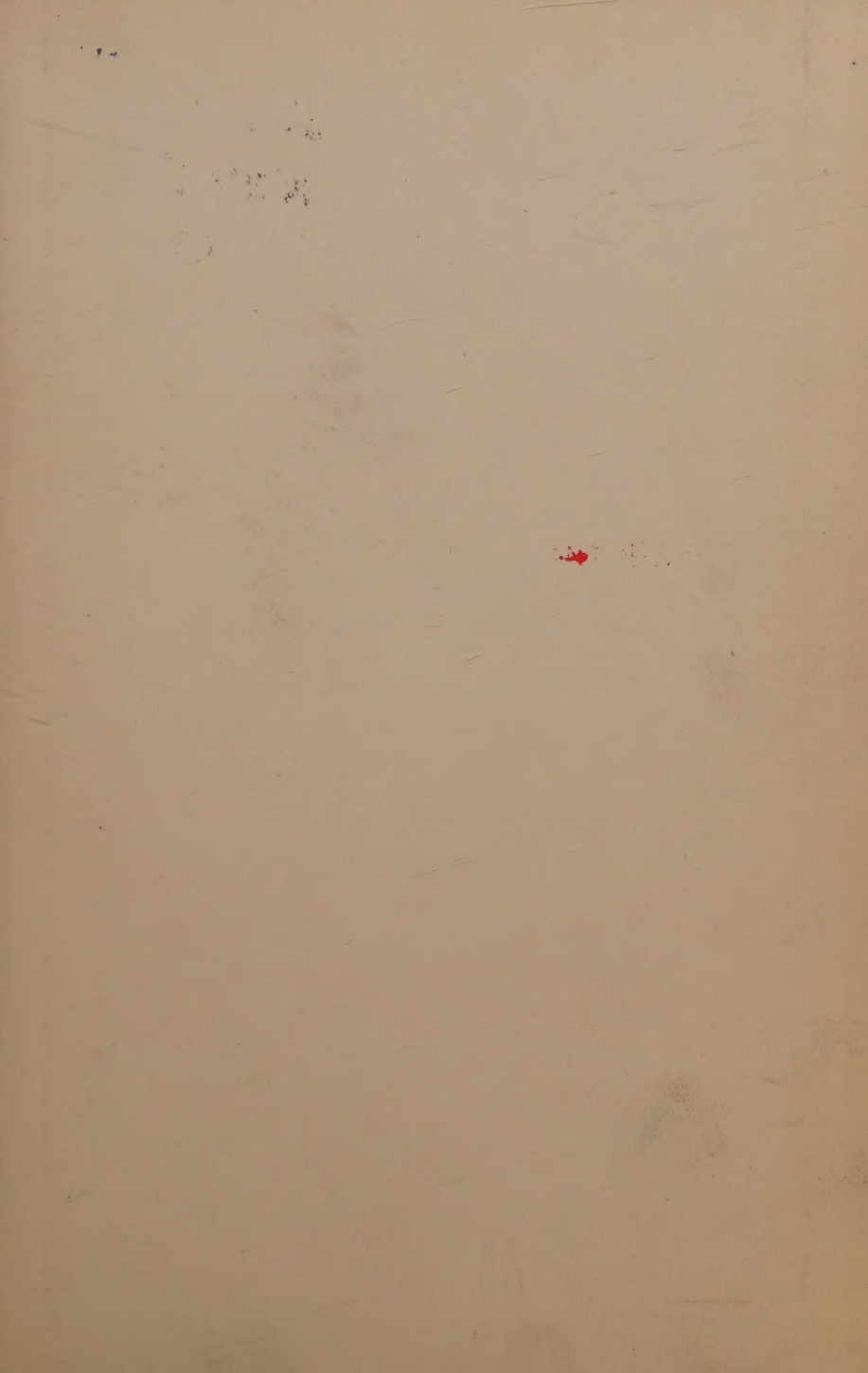
STUDIES IN ANCIENT
AND MODERN JUDAISM

BY
ISIDOR KALISCH

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1928



**STUDIES IN ANCIENT
AND MODERN JUDAISM**



Respectfully Yours
Dr. Fridor Kalisch

STUDIES IN ANCIENT AND MODERN JUDAISM

ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE, THE SOURCE
OF CIVILIZATION, DIVINE PROV-
IDENCE, BIBLICAL AND TALMUDICAL
ESSAYS, AND KINDRED SUBJECTS

SELECTED WRITINGS OF
RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH

Edited and Compiled with a

MEMOIR BY

SAMUEL KALISCH

Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey

And an Introduction by

JOSHUA BLOCH, PH.D.

Chief of the Jewish Division, New York Public Library

JEWS' COLLEGE

LONDON



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With deep reverence and filial love to the memory of my mother, Charlotte Kalisch, whose maternal guiding hand was stilled by death in the flower of womanhood, and to the memory of my wife, Caroline Elizabeth, my true and faithful comrade and devoted and affectionate helpmate through life, this volume is dedicated.

FOREWORD

This volume constitutes a modest though representative collection of the writings of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch which until now was available only in the periodical and literary publications where they first saw the light of day. They were drawn from the files of the "Israelite," "Occident," "Deborah," "Jewish Chronicle," etc. A number of the articles are printed here for the first time, while a number of the letters in the Memoir have never been published before.

It is believed that they will prove of value to the present generation and may contribute much to a better understanding of some of the perplexing problems ever confronting Jewry.

In reproducing these articles no effort was made to modify to any extent quotations, spelling of proper names, or the quaintness of style in which some of the writings were published years ago.

Thanks are due to Mr. Abraham Berger, of the staff of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, to Mrs. Elizabeth Dobsevage and to Mrs. Susanna Tapson, who diligently collected a good deal of the material and aided in transcribing it.

It is hoped that the reception which this volume of essays and studies will receive will justify the publication of additional writings by the great American Rabbi, scholar and thinker.

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INTRODUCTION

Rabbi Isidor Kalisch (1816-1886), an account of whose life is presented in this volume in the Memoir written with loving heart and pride by a distinguished son, belonged to that group of men who were instrumental in laying the foundations of Reform Judaism in America. He belonged to that band of reform pioneers, coming from Germany, who endeavored to revitalize and regenerate the Synagogue life of American Jewry, filling the hearts and the homes with new faith and hope and new self-respect as Jews. Rabbi Kalisch came to America at a critical period in Jewish life. It was an age of transition. Leaders in Jewry were then few in the United States, and small as was the number of congregations still fewer were the Rabbis. Religious affairs in American Jewry were in a chaotic state. And still, despite these unpromising conditions, Rabbi Isidor Kalisch had great hopes for Jews and Judaism in America. To the development of American Judaism he brought an intense admiration of the Torah, an unshakeable faith in the teachings and ideals of Judaism, and a rare appreciation of the office and dignity of the Rabbi and of the place of the scholar in Jewish life.

This was just what one might expect from one who was himself a product of an unusual time and of a remarkable intellectual atmosphere. The time of Isidor Kalisch's mental development and preparations was marked by extraordinary happenings. Israel was awakening from the lethargic influences of the Middle Ages. It was the time when freedom had kindled its torch and spread its enlightenment everywhere. Deeply stirred by the great political

upheaval of the French Revolution, by the social fermentations of 1848, by the fervid cosmopolitanism of Schiller and by the rationalism and tolerance of Lessing, Israel began to reclaim its birthright of religious and political freedom. At that time men trained in the lore of the rabbis of old became the disciples of Kant and Hegel. The theory of evolution gradually penetrated their minds. Such was the generation to which Rabbi Isidor Kalisch belonged. A product of a period of transition, Kalisch stood between a generation of fixed religious views and customs and a new generation struggling for a freer life. He stood between the borderlines of a past dying and a future rising.

Rabbi Isidor Kalisch belonged to that divine élite who among the early leaders of American Judaism acted as fearless apostles of the Truth, as finchless missionaries of an ideal and enlightened religion. He wanted Truth and not the semblance of Truth. He was therefore frank and honest and sincere, always speaking the Truth in his heart, never flattering, never beguiling and never cringing. He stands out in unique splendor as one who dared when young to advocate reforms in the religious life of the Jew, an act which called forth the disapproval of Zacharias Frankel, the first Rector of the conservative Rabbinical Seminary in Breslau. Rabbi Isidor Kalisch always felt that his duty was to teach Judaism in the light in which he understood it, and to point out the relation of Judaism to all social, ethical and even political questions. In this he asserted himself as a leader. For him Judaism spelt progress and development, and therein he found the key to unlock the mysteries of the past, and at the same time the magic power wherewith to vitalize the faith of Israel for the generations to come. Kalisch therefore endeavored to fashion the forms of religious life in a modern spirit, interpreting Jewish beliefs and practices in the light of scientific progress.

Rabbi Isidor Kalisch belonged to those few noble spirits

who, from time to time, are sent to this earth, in order that through them men shall learn how to find an approach to the true way of life. He conceived his mission on earth to reveal a part of the Divine Nature—the quality of love and peace holding and uniting mankind in the service of God. Kalisch constantly endeavored to infuse keen reverence and enthusiasm into the common relations of life and to sanctify all the functions of humanity. His ministration was to keep alive, not to destroy, to fan into a flame the slumbering spark, not to crush and to trample under foot the sacred traditions—the heritage of the House of Israel. By word of mouth and pen he endeavored to influence the minds with noble thoughts, and to his deep-seated convictions he gave expression in forcible language. Kalisch made it his task to teach his people and the world what it means to be a Jew and what duties Judaism enjoins, what sacrifices it demands, and how its end and aim are to infuse into the whole humanity the universalistic ideals conceived and propounded by Israel's early teachers and prophets. Kalisch contributed much to the efforts to establish peace and harmony in human experience. He sought peace between knowledge and faith, harmony between the heart and the mind.

To most of us today the words "Reform" and "Orthodoxy" are devoid of any special meaning, but in Rabbi Isidor Kalisch's day they sounded the battle-cry of freedom of thought and liberty of conscience within Jewry. Kalisch stood in the very thick of the battle. He had caught the enthusiasm for Reform in Judaism from the German masters of the new movement and with heart and soul he threw himself into the struggle. Believing in the free, natural and unhampered development of Judaism upon a historical and traditional basis, he maintained that the principles underlying the Biblical polity which constitute the strength of Judaism as a social agency are the

foundations upon which the brotherhood of humanity is based. The principle of freedom within the law—equality before the law, and humanity outside the law—these have become reembodyed in the life and institutions of the American people. Rabbi Kalisch was a constant and consistent advocate of those principles and endeavored to make his life a noble representation of their beauty and efficacy. As a Reformer in Judaism Rabbi Isidor Kalisch aimed at the conservation of its permanent values. To this he contributed abundantly of the fruit of his vast learning and enabled it to profit fully of the ripeness of his judgment. It was his firm belief that reforms in the religious life of the Jew could find their warrant in the Talmudic and later Rabbinical writings. No wonder then that while he was pioneering in Reform Rabbi Kalisch was eminently the traditionalist, holding fast to the Talmudic standpoint and to the conviction that Judaism is a continued growth, a constant development. To Rabbi Isidor Kalisch Judaism was at no time a concluded and sealed work. To him Judaism meant the mental, moral and historical development of the whole of the life of Israel and the reverence for everything which the House of Israel produced. A good many are wont to associate the beginning and the growth of the Reform movement in America with the name dearest to them above all names. But when the history of the Reform movement in Judaism in this country will be written by an impartial hand it will be found that Rabbi Isidor Kalisch occupies one of the chief places of honor among a galaxy of many great names. He not only contributed much to the formulation of its principles and ideals, but helped more in the creation of some of the instruments which wrought for it a lasting place in American Jewish life. The success of the Cleveland Conference of 1855 owed much to his enthusiasm and participation in it. The *Minhag America*, the prayer book of the early American

Reform congregations, was largely possible through his labors. Together with Isaac M. Wise and Benjamin Rothenheim he gave progressive Judaism a prayer book meeting the needs of the day and conforming to the principles and beliefs it advocated.

The desire to recast the liturgy of the Synagogue into happier molds led him to court the muses. Many a beautiful hymn found in present day Jewish Hymnals came from his lyre. Those that he wrote in the German language have an easy flow. One cannot but think that notwithstanding his insistence on the use of the English language, Kalisch himself in the very depth of his emotions founded the truest notes in the language in which his mother had breathed her prayers over his modest cradle.

The writings of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch, selections of which are presented in the present volume, must be read in the light of the times that called them forth. In order to estimate them at their proper worth one must also bear in mind the passions and prejudices of the days of their birth. Whatever their contents and however valuable their contribution to Jewish literature, it must be admitted that Rabbi Isidor Kalisch, at least in some of his writings, especially those of a controversial nature, displays both the virtues and the faults of a pen predisposed rapidly to write down the passing thoughts of a fugitive hour. Kalisch was ever ready to meet his opponents. He was bold in his attacks upon those whom he deemed to be obstacles in the path of progressive Judaism. If, at times, he was somewhat too vehement in exposing the weaknesses of his opponents, not overfastidious in the choice of his powerful invectives and denunciations of them, these characteristics were undoubtedly in keeping with the pioneer custom then prevailing in the arena of religious polemics. He was ever unflinching and untiring in defending the principles of Reform Judaism against all assailants both within the

camp of Israel and without. Zealous for the honor of Israel he never permitted to pass unchallenged any attack, whether explicit or implicit, upon the name of Jew or Judaism. At a time when there was hardly anyone among the leading Jews in this land sufficiently able to speak the word of truth in the English language or sufficiently courageous to stand before non-Jewish audiences and disabuse their minds of ancient errors, his uttered and written word penetrated into the realms of bigotry and scattered the hosts of the prejudiced.

From whatever point of view the life and activities of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch be looked at, they reflect the rays of a great and fertile mind. He knew well that the spoken word, however eloquent, is confined in its reach to a limited audience and that learning, ever so crude, is void of fruition unless it be translated into popular language and sent broadcast into the homes of men. Hence his frequent contributions to the periodical press of his day and his diligence as a translator and interpreter of difficult but most important works of Jewish literature. The writings of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch will have a place in the history of literature pertaining to the development of modern Judaism, to the perplexing problems of which he gave without stint the full measure and maturity of his resourceful mind. May the inspiration derived from the example of his invincible fidelity to the cause of Judaism transmit itself to later ages. May this volume of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch's writings serve as an inviolable heritage of his wide scholarship and breadth of view. May it also stand as a Gal'ed, an enduring "heap of witness," to things Rabbi Isidor Kalisch and his contemporaries wrought in American Israel.

JOSHUA BLOCH.

New York Public Library,
January, 1928.

RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH

A MEMOIR *

Isidor Kalisch was born on the fifteenth of November, eighteen hundred and sixteen, at Krotoschin, in the Duchy of Posen, Prussia. His parents were Burnham Kalisch and Sarah Tobias Kalisch. His father was deeply versed in Hebraic lore, and widely known throughout the Duchy, where he lived and died, as a man of learning, piety and benevolence. He died on the first of September, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, at Krotoschin.

His mother was a woman of great energy, devout piety, strong intellect and goodness of heart. She lived to witness the triumphs of the subject of this memoir, in the chosen field of her belief, and died on the fourteenth of March, eighteen hundred and eighty-three, in the city of New York, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years.

Isidor Kalisch was the eldest of their seven children. At an early age Isidor manifested great interest in abstruse subjects and a thirst for knowledge. In his ninth year he was remarkably proficient in Talmudical and Hebrew learning. He was encouraged in his studious inclinations by his fond parents, who indulged him every facility available to that end. In the course of time he studied theology, philology, philosophy, and science at the

* A considerable portion of this memoir is taken from "In Memoriam," a biographical sketch of Rabbi Isidor Kalisch, published by his son, Samuel Kalisch, Newark, 1886.

Universities of Berlin, Breslau and Prague, and that he was an apt and excellent scholar is amply testified to, by glowing testimonials from such eminent and wide-renowned professors as Lichtenstein, Diesterweg, Gruson and Edward Munk.

While pursuing his studies at the Universities, he contributed to leading German periodicals and newspapers, among which were the *Orient*, edited by the celebrated Dr. Julius Fuerst, *Breslauer Beobachter* and *Figaro*. These contributions won for the young student golden opinions and an enviable literary reputation.

From a letter, dated Breslau, January 5, 1838 (see pp. 3 and 4), addressed to Kalisch by the renowned Zacharias Frankel, of Breslau, it is evident that the spirit of reform had already fired the soul of the young rabbi. In fact, the sermon to which Frankel alludes was delivered by Kalisch before the first reform sermon was preached at Charleston, South Carolina, marking the beginning of the Reform Movement in America in which Kalisch was destined to play so important a part.

The war-like feeling which existed throughout Prussia in 1842 aroused the ardor and enthusiasm of young Kalisch, and evoked from him a patriotic poem, entitled, "Schlacht-Gesang der Deutschen" (War Song of the Germans), which he dedicated to the Prince of Prussia (since Emperor of Germany), from whom he received the following letter of thanks:

"Den von Ihnen unterm 31ten v. M. und f. uebersendeten Schlacht-Gesang der Deutschen habe Ich mit Dank aufgenommen,
Berlin den 12ten Januar 1843.

PRINZ V PREUSSEN."

An Herrn Isidor Kalisch.

Ihre bewilligende zu dem obigen Kontrakt hat sich noch Ihre Erlasse zum
 geistlichen Rathe übergeben. Aber meine Commission in irgend eine Sache
 eines Abtrags nicht der Art sein, und was ich in irgend eine Angelegenheit
 fallen, irgend ein zu einem anderen Kommissions. Dagegen will ich, da ich
 ich mit Hindernissen zu einer gewissen Sache, Ihre mein Werk nicht ohne das
 Gange nicht zu sein. Ich habe mich mit dem Rathe auf einen der
 eine Verantwortung, die einen neuen Kommissions Kontrakt all einen geistlichen
 Rathe ist. Ich will den Kontrakt was eine Verantwortung der Gange, und das
 dabei auch Gange gegen den, welche neue Verantwortung ausführen. Ich habe schon gesagt
 ich ist nicht, und die Verantwortung in der Angelegenheit, und was man
 pflichten, wenn ich ich auch sehr verantworten. Wenn ich nicht, dabei verantworten
 bei Ihrer Sache bleiben, ich verantworten nicht, und was man
 das ganze Kommissions Kontrakt der Verantwortung zu sein gehen. Ihren Kontrakt soll
 aber einen Kontrakt sein. Ich habe den Kontrakt nicht, und was man
 Ihre besten Wissen, aber ich habe den Kontrakt nicht, und was man
 Aufgeben. Ich habe aber auch einen Kontrakt nicht, und was man
 den Kontrakt nicht, und was man
 auf einen geistlichen Rathe, in der Angelegenheit der Verantwortung,
 wenn ich ich auch nicht ohne meine Verantwortung, sondern ich
 nicht.

mit Aufgebung

[Signature]

Berlin d. 5. Januar 1838.

[Signature]

LETTER FROM ZACHARIAS FRANKEL TO RABBI KALISCH DATED
 JANUARY 5, 1838, COMMENTING ON THE LATTER'S SERMON.

TRANSLATION OF ZACHARIAS FRANKEL'S LETTER

Addressed to Rabbi Kalisch after he had preached his first sermon at the age of twenty-one.

Your sermon returned herewith has convinced me of your talent as a clerical orator. A correction of a few single sentences is out of the question, and what I should have to criticize in detail should be done only by word of mouth. However, as you threw yourself on my judgment, I will not keep back my opinion of the whole. You have given diligence and eloquence to a task which is less an instructive sermon than an impetuous polemic. You protect the Deity from the reproach of wrath and you are at the same time full of wrath against those who express this reproach. Indeed, your zeal leads you so far that you turn from defense to attack, which one perceives, even though you half conceal it. Nevertheless, while you thus at least stick to your subject, you finally leave it plainly by making war against the thoughtless study of the ceremonies. A sermon, however, should not be a polemic. Instruct your audience, by all means, to the best of your knowledge but do not entertain it with a refutation of different opinions. I feel confident by this, in my opinion, out-of-place sermon, that if you will avoid all polemics and attacks directed to the outside and appeal to the mind and soul of your listeners within the bounds of sound doctrine, you should accomplish gratifying results.

With respect,

Faithfully yours,

DR. FRANKEL.

Breslau, Jan. 5th, 1838.

This poem was soon after set to music by Director Mueller, of Breslau, and became one of the popular songs of Germany at that period.

In 1843 Kalisch delivered the first German sermon ever preached in his native town. His effort was a pronounced success.

In the same year, 1843, Kalisch married Charlotte, a daughter of Abner and Bettina Bankman.

But the restlessness of the times was such in Prussia that a liberty-loving citizen, such as young Kalisch was, stood in imminent danger of being drawn away from his peaceful vocation and plunged into the vortex of political feeling and expression. Imbued with the love of liberty, and witnessing the oppression of his fellow-men under the forms of government and law, his generous nature decried these things; he wrote poems breathing the true spirit of liberty; contributed articles to newspapers, which were condemned as seditious by tyrannical censors, and thus, when in eighteen hundred and forty-eight, the revolutionary fever had reached a crisis, he became one of the many citizens who were inimical to the ends of Prussian bureaucracy. These champions of progress were stumbling blocks in the path of tyranny and oppression. He was compelled to leave Germany. He made his way to London, England, and after a sojourn there of several months, left for New York City, where, after an ocean trip in the sailing vessel, *Rolla*, lasting nearly nine weeks, he arrived on the twenty-eighth of August, eighteen hundred and forty-nine.

He immediately set himself the task of finding some vacancy in the pulpit in one of the few Jewish congrega-

tions which were then flourishing in this country. He met with success in his endeavors, for in the month of July, eighteen hundred and fifty, he received a call from the congregation, "Anshe Chesed," of Cleveland, Ohio, to officiate as their minister.

He arrived in Cleveland on the twenty-fourth of July, eighteen hundred and fifty, and at once assumed the duties of his position. He found his congregation of the true orthodox type. By the expression "true orthodox" is here meant that the majority of the members of his congregation were hermetically attached to all the traditional Jewish religious rites and ceremonies—to many rites and ceremonies which were suitable to the circumstances, customs, and conditions of the Jews of by-gone ages and climes. The preacher saw at once that this condition must be remedied. But how? A resolution once fixed in his mind always received prompt and speedy execution. It so happened in this case. His advanced views soon led to a schism, so that with a very virile minority he withdrew from "Anshe Chesed" and founded a new congregation, "Tifereth Israel," now "The Temple" of that city.

Unhesitatingly and boldly, he planted the banner of Reform Judaism. By "Reform Judaism," according to the young preacher's theory, was a Judaism founded on the Bible, with science, reason and philosophy as monitors and guides. The preacher's act was bold and hazardous. Dependent upon a small salary, surrounded by orthodox congregations, who were wedded body and soul to many antiquated traditions, customs and rites of their forefathers, a rupture between the minister and his flock would leave

no inviting prospects to the courageous innovator. Luckily this rupture did not occur. Strong sense, scholarly arguments, earnest zeal, honest and candid labor on the preacher's part prevented it. There was opposition, but it dwindled into nothingness. Dissenters there were, but they yielded to his manly and candid views and his lucid exposition of the Mosaic law. His congregation became imbued with the spirit of reform. It was a sudden revolution in the affairs of the Jewish church. Like all sudden revolutions, it produced instantaneous results. Useless and meaningless religious rites, customs and ceremonies were abolished. The preacher's course, while it received the sanction of his congregation, drew him into heated controversies with the orthodox Jewish ministers in various cities. Their attacks were, however, met by his trenchant and facile pen. The result of his vigorous onslaught on the outlived ceremonies, customs and rites was the assembling of the first conference of rabbis at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1855. In the "Israelite," dated July 6th, 1885, appeared the following appeal by Kalisch for a Rabbinical Conference:

THE CONFERENCE

"Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me!"

"It is not unknown to you, that a great confusion and diversity in matters of doctrines and dogmas referring to our holy religion is prevailing in this country, and that each one attempts to convince the other of the superiority of his convictions, but instead of coming to an understanding, passion and bitterness, alas! soon interfere. They rebuke and condemn all dissenters, and declare their own party

only the sole representative of true Judaism. This struggle of all against all must lead to discord, corruption and eventually to dissolution. How should you, the guides and leaders of Israel, forget those excellent words (tending to reconciliation) of the prophet Malachi, ii, 10, 'Have we not all one father? has not one God created us? why do we despise each other?'

"Did you not hear the call of the Jewish press, and especially of this valuable paper? Why do you hesitate to report your appearance at the conference? You are well aware of that passage: כל המקיים נפש אחד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל כֻּלּוֹ קַיִם "עולם מלא. "Now, how can you be so indifferent, and take no part in a cause concerning the highest spiritual welfare of many thousand Israelites and their posterity?

"Brethren! As Israelites, and especially as guides of Israelites, you are in duty bound to come forth, no matter, whether you call yourselves reformers, or ultra-reformers, or orthodox or ultra-orthodox. We all believe in One God and the Holy Writ, revealed to Moses and the prophets, and therefore let us agree upon the main points of our holy law, and with candor and love of truth strictly pronounce, what may be done, and what may not be done, consulting only the Holy Scriptures and the historically founded traditions as the fountain-head of the Mosaic religion, and making these the standard of our resolutions. I know, you would ask, what resolutions can we form? Is it not written in the Bible, Deut. iv, 2, 'You shall not add unto the word, which I command you, neither shall you diminish from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God?'

"Have we not our Talmud? Have we not our Rambam and other Poskim? Have we not our ארבע שלחן ערוך by which we are guided? But you must not forget that the aforementioned biblical verse relates only to abstract ideas, morals and truths, communicated to us in the Bible, but not in reference to ceremonies, and therefore history teaches us, that the Rabbis have added many ceremonies, for instance the Feast of Purim at the time of Mordecai and Queen Esther, the Feast of Dedication, and their observances, and that they have abolished many ceremonies, for instance: ר' יב"ז תיקן והעביר הודיית המעשר מעשר שני וכן תיקן שלא להשקות הסוטה (סוטה מ"ו) מ'הת שביעית משמטה ותיקן הלל פרחובל גיטין פ' השולח מצות שופר ולולב בטלו בשבת שמא יעבירו במצות הליצא קודמת למצות י"בום שמא נתן בה עיניו.

And even so have they altered a great many other laws. See for instance Maimonides' "Mishneh Torah" (Hilchot Shechilot, Chapter III, etc.).

"We see clearly, that only the moral laws and ideas, as spiritual truths written down in the Bible, are unchangeable and everlasting as God himself, but not so all the ceremonies, the material signs and symbols of certain truths, as I have irrefutably proved; because such external signs, as all matter in the world, are subject to a change, they become obsolete in the lapse of times, and express no longer the same meaning, which they did before. Different climates, countries, circumstances and usages make them impracticable now, and make them void of any effect whatever. Therefore, it must be admitted, that the united theologians have a perfect right (as this was always the

case in Israel, and which fact is supported by history) to make regulations and improvements (Takanot) adapted to the spirit of the time, where not old authorities, but common sense has to influence them in deciding, whether we shall keep down all the ceremonies, which are handed down to us, and if some of them shall be changed, altered or entirely abolished. Let us therefore, not quarrel any longer about matters of faith, and let us not indulge in affected wisdom in useless and sophistical discussions, because only little minds busy themselves about that; but intelligent men endeavor to act.

“Let us take to heart the principle of our sages: **חביבין דברי סופרים מדברי תורה** (Yerushalmi Berachoth, chap. I, Mishnah Sanhedrin II, 3, Tana Eliyahu Zuta, chap. II in the beginning), and let us all establish **הלכה למעשה**; and you will see wonders. Everywhere infidelity and superstition will be conquered, everywhere a new life and spirit will be awakened, where a true faith dwells. Happy every one, who cooperates in that, which is about to cause the regeneration of our nation, and happy those, who are struggling for our holy religion to obtain again the honor and veneration, which shall distinguish it, and shall extol it above all religions upon earth.”

The signatories to the call for the Cleveland Conference were Rabbis Guinzburg, of Baltimore, Cohen, of Albany, Hochheimer, of Baltimore, Illoway, of St. Louis, Kalisch, of Cleveland, Lilienthal, of Cincinnati, Merzbacher, of New York, and Rothenheim and Wise of Cincinnati. The rabbis met in conference on Wednesday, October 17th, 1855, in the hall of the Medical College, and Rabbi Kalisch took

Gebet, Buch

für den

Öeffentlichen Gottesdienst

und die

Privat-Andacht.

Theil I.

Geordnet und übersetzt von der in der Gewesländer
Conferenz ernannten liturgischen Commission,
den Rabbinnern Kalisch, Rothengelm
und Wisse.

Cincinnati,

Verlegt bei Bloch u. Co., Herausgeber des „Stradler“ und „Doherty“.

1857.

מנהג אפערדיקא

הפלות בני ישראל

חלק א'

כדור והעתיקו בפסקות האמיתית הנדלה בק"ק קליוולאנד

הרבנים יצחק מאיר ב"ר יהודה. בנימין ב"ר
יצחק. ישראל בן משה ר"ר שמחה כונם

ציניצינאטי:

ברפוס בלאך וקאמפאניא.

הרד"ז לפ"ק.

the chair and opened the meeting with a Hebrew prayer written in masterful verse for the occasion. Rabbi Lilienthal acted as Secretary pro tem. A permanent organization was then effected with the election of Rabbi Wise as President and Rabbi Lilienthal as Secretary.

The object of this conference was to better the spiritual condition of the Jews in America; to strip the Jewish divine service from heathenish and idolatrous customs; to weed out meaningless and useless prayers, and to establish a uniform divine service throughout the land. In this endeavor Rabbi Kalisch found active and strong co-laborers in Rabbis Lilienthal, Wise, Rothenheim, Merzbacher, Cohen and others. A common prayer book was agreed upon, and the "Minhag America," which is the basis of the Reform prayer-book now in use, was largely the labor of the subject of this sketch, upon whom devolved a portion of the editorial work thereof. In his "Reminiscences," pp. 344-5, published at Cincinnati in 1901, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, discussing the methods used in the preparation of the "Minhag America," says:

"We determined to publish the work after we had finished it, and submit it to the synod, in case it should be convened; if not, it was to be submitted to the congregations directly. With this understanding we went to work. Wise was the referee, Kalisch and Rothenheim the critics. Whatever was not adopted unanimously was rejected. Wise made the English version, for which Nathan Mayer furnished metrical translations. Kalisch and Rothenheim composed the metrical portions of the German version. The prose German translations were divided among the three."

Notwithstanding the manifold tasks assumed by Rabbi Kalisch, he did not neglect the spiritual welfare of his Cleveland charge. Through his efforts a new synagogue was

erected, and his congregation became large and flourishing. The children were taught by him the principles of Judaism in the school attached to the synagogue, and a most harmonious feeling existed between the minister and his congregation. The industry of Rabbi Kalisch was never ceasing. The more labor he performed in behalf of Judaism, the better he liked it. His whole soul was devoted to the sacred cause of lifting his brethren to a position of equality with the rest of mankind—to rescue them from the uncharitable and despicable position in which blind prejudice and fanaticism had plunged them. He did not attempt to accomplish this in a craven and fawning spirit; but on the contrary, in a bold and incisive manner, even to aggressiveness. This is amply illustrated by a most masterly production from his pen, which appeared in book-form as early as 1853, entitled "*Wegweiser fuer rationelle Forschungen in den Biblischen Schriften.*" This book created a profound impression, both in Europe and America. It stamps its author as a classical scholar, and profound thinker, an acute but dispassionate critic, and a true and loyal defender of the principles of Judaism. The English, German and French press were unanimous in their praise of the high literary merit displayed by the author, his sound critical judgment and the great value of the book as a theological work.

The most learned rabbis and Jewish theologians of this country and Europe were unstinted in their encomiums upon the merits of his contribution; its great value as a sound and unbiased theological study, the comprehensive knowledge and learning displayed by the author in the

Washington 30. August 1858

Reverend Sir,

I have received your "Guide
for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical writings"
& accept it with much pleasure as a token
of your regard. I have no doubt I shall
derive both pleasure & profit from its perusal,
but the pressure of public business may prevent
me from doing this for some time to come.

Yours very respectfully

James Buchanan
Rev. Dr. Isidor Kalisch

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT BUCHANAN
ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF KALISCH'S "GUIDE"

treatment of his subject and the incontrovertible arguments adduced by him to sustain his view regarding the New Testament.

As one rabbi aptly expressed it in reviewing the book:

"In the critical exposition of the gospel, according to Matthew, the author adopts two plans; he points out the mistakes committed by the writer, and the contradictions which that book embodies; and then he examines the moral and religious doctrines contained therein, pointing out their respective sources in the Bible and in the rabbinical literature. He succeeds in establishing two important facts. First, that the book cannot be of a divine origin on account of the mistakes and contradictions contained therein; and secondly, that the moral part of the book has no claim to originality, being a synopsis of what has been written previously to Matthew. The logical deduction of these facts is, that Christianity is an inaccurate synopsis of Judaism, which by no means supersedes the latter; it only confirms the superiority and divinity of the latter. Our author is very minute on this subject and treats it with considerable earnestness, developing an extensive knowledge of our national literature and handling the subject matter with such respect as is due to a subject of such importance, and also to the feelings of the community. It throws light upon a vital question of religious interest, which is eminently calculated to give an impulse to new and extensive researches."

This work was so favorably received that Rabbi M. Mayer, of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1857 produced and published an excellent English translation thereof, and it found a rapid sale. Its English title is, "Kalisch's Guide. A Guide for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical Writings, being an Examination of the Doctrinal Difference between Judaism and Primitive Christianity, Based upon a Critical Exposition of the Book of Matthew."

For other opinions of the merit of the work and the service rendered by Kalisch thereby to Judaism and the community one may consult the letters of recommenda-

tion from various rabbis, and extracts from *Klein's Yahr-buch* and *Der Hausfreund*, prefixed to "Kalisch's Guide," published in 1857.

Kalisch had scarcely been in this country five years before his reputation as an erudite scholar and as a philologist of high rank was widely established. Amidst his innumerable labors, he was requested early in the summer of 1855, by Professor Gibbs, of Yale College, to decipher a Phœnician inscription which had been found in Sidon, Asia.

A short extract from a letter to the editor of the *Journal of Commerce*, dated Beirut, February 11, 1855, regarding the finding of this inscription, will not prove uninteresting in this connection:

"On the 19th of January last some men were digging for more hidden treasure in an ancient cemetery on the Plain of Sidon, called 'Mughorat Tubloon,' when at the depth of about twelve feet below the surface and near the walls of an ancient edifice, they uncovered a sarcophagus, upon the lid of which there is a long Phœnician inscription. This lid is of a blue-black marble, intensely hard, and taking a very fine polish. The lid is about eight feet long by four feet wide. The upper end is wrought into the figure of a female; head and shoulders of almost a giant size. The features are Egyptian, with large, full, almond-shaped eyes; the nose flattened and lips remarkably thick and somewhat after the negro mould. The whole countenance is smiling, agreeable and expressive beyond anything I have ever seen in the disinterred monuments of Egypt and Nineveh. The head-dress resembles that which appears in Egyptian figures, on each shoulder is the head of some bird—a dove or pigeon—and the bosom is covered by what appears to be a sort of cape, with a deep fringe—as of lace. On the lid below the figurehead is the inscription, consisting of twenty-two lines closely written.

"In the meantime a controversy has arisen in regard to the ownership of the discovered monument between the English and French consuls in this place.

"The Turkish Governor of Sidon, in this state of the matter, has

closed up the ground and protected it by a guard of soldiers while the question is before the courts."

During this controversy Rev. Dr. Van Dyck, an American missionary from Albany, New York, while the sarcophagus was exposed and in view, embraced an opportunity to make an exact transcript of the whole inscription, which he sent to a friend in Albany. In this way copies of the inscription were sent to the various Semitic scholars in America, among whom was Professor Gibbs, and from whom Kalisch received the copy which he successfully deciphered. Kalisch's translation of the inscription was sent to the Syro-Egyptian Society, of London, England, and on the thirteenth of November, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, the late Dr. Benisch, of London, read it before that Society. It was afterwards compared with others made by F. E. C. Dietrich, of Marburg; by the Duc de Luynes of Paris, and William W. Turner, and selected as the one to be published in the transactions of the society. An article descriptive of this find and its transcription appears on pages 242-7 of the present volume.

With a never idle pen and always battling for the triumph of reason over superstition and custom, Kalisch kept the Jewish press busy with his contributions on religious topics and religious controversies.

On the 25th of March, 1856, Charlotte, the beloved wife of Kalisch, departed this life, in her thirty-seventh year. The following words spoken at the grave are indicative of his sense of loss:

"Lord of all spirits! Father of all souls! Bestow upon all whose remains slumber in the dust peace and bliss, and let

them walk in the infinite path of perfection, and rise to the height of the bright shining ways, to Thee, the Life of life. Amen.

“My mourning friends—Although an old custom forbids us to deliver a funeral sermon in this month, it interdicts not and cannot interdict a husband from breathing out his profound grief on the grave of his ardent loving wife, and from making on this occasion a few moral remarks.

“To you who were coming to mourn with me, the deeply affected consort, and participate in the great affliction grieving me to the heart and bending me down to the ground, and to consecrate your thoughts to this early deceased, whose memory will always be before my mind, I must confess indeed, that she who departed from us deserves all this sympathy and all these piteous tears flowing about her undissembled, for she was agreeable in life and society; she was a faithful wife, an affectionate mother, and sincere friend of the poor and distressed. She had done in this world as much as she could do in her circumstances, and has left a circle who will honorably remember her a long time to come.

“Oh! the deep wounds of our hearts may well bleed for this early deceased; for we can only speak words to the living, showing friendships only to them; but what can we give to the beloved dead whose remains this coffin embraces? Our love and veneration for her have merely tears, shed in remembrance of her noble character, and our friendship is become a sigh. Therefore I am unable to refrain from crying aloud the plaintive words: Why must I lose the Miriam of my soul, the loving and kind instructress of my chil-

dren? Why was she taken away so early from my heart? Oh! she was attached to us with a great fidelity; why should not this be rewarded to her? Cheerfully had the dear soul taken fast hold of this life; willingly, as she often repeated, she would endure unspeakable pains and suffering to abide with us. But in vain! her stream of life curdled, her eyes grew dim, and this soul, full of love, departed. She withdrew from us in obedience to the call of the Almighty, and hastened away to the land of bliss. I would be, indeed, in a perfect despairing and miserable plight, had not the voice of our holy religion consoled me. Our sages have well remarked, הכל צפוי 'all is perceived'; the whole universe is penetrated by the divine eye, or הכל בידי שמים 'all happens directly through the influence of God', and hence is the death of the much deplored a divine decree.

"She was ripe for better worlds. Before the beloved deceased existed, had God fixed the last one of her hours of life in this world; the germ of her destinies commenced to expand in the moment when she was born. Oh! whilst she was smiling in our circle her dying began; she endured nameless pains, and the angel of death hovered over her head. All assistance of the physician, all my own support and that of many honorable and praiseworthy ladies by whom she was surrounded, could not add one span to her lifetime. The brilliant light was destined to go out; for שכר מצוה בהאי עולמא ליכא 'the reward of the righteous is not always given in this world.'

"The departed should enjoy eternal happiness, and she was prepared for heaven. It was the decree and will of God, and therefore was the advice and support of men

powerless. I will then not murmur in my affliction, which shakes me deeply, against Providence, but I will speak out the words with truth, יהי שם ה' מברך 'For all that happened shall be blessed the name of the Eternal.'

"And now we return in Thy holy name, O all-gracious, the mortal remains to the earth from whence they were taken, and commend the immortal and eternal part into thy hands. לקץ ותנוח ותעמוד לגורלך לקץ הימין 'And you may depart to your perfection, and rest from the miserable earthly calamities, and appear once again as an angel to your lot at the end of days.' Amen."

לישראל לזכרון מזמור טוב

שושני רעיתי כשמש זורחת	אך בואת נחמה לי צומחת
רעד יאחזני מאין הפונה	לנהרי אל שלחת יונקותיך
התבל תחשך מיגון ותונה	קטבך מות לא לנצח
אהה! אבקשך ואת בורחת	אל משכני עליון תרימי מצח
יהללוך בשער במר נפש אחת	למרום נקראת בדמי ימך
שמת וזכרוך כבושם בערונה	יפעת ארץ תבו גם אמש
רוחה יעמוד לנפשי נוגה	שבת עדן טוב לך מאור שמש

In April, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, Kalisch received a call from the congregation "Ahabath Achim," of Cincinnati, Ohio, where he officiated until he resigned the following year, in order to accept a call from the congregation "Benai Jeshurun," of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Rabbi Kalisch continued unstintingly his efforts on behalf of Reform. In the "Israelite" of June 13, 1856, appeared the following impassioned appeal for a second conference of Rabbis under the heading of "Our Sphere of Activity as Israelites":

"The great call and perpetual mission of a true Israelite is to fight a courageous battle with the kingdom of darkness, with the power of sin, as the divine bard sang: 'the exalted praises of God in the mouth of the pious are a two-edged sword in their hand.' Or as the prophet Isaiah said: 'For behold, darkness covers the earth and a profound obscurity the nations; but over you will shine forth the Lord, and his glory shall be seen over you, that nations may walk in your light and rulers in the brightness of your shining.'

"Under the expression 'light' should not be understood political power; but as the Talmud Treatise Megillah 16. and the Midrash Bereshith Rabbah, chap. 3 well remark, the word 'light' means a true knowledge of the law, greatness of mind and soul. It must be, therefore, a constant endeavor and the most important affair of an Israelite, if he wishes to accomplish the duties incumbent on his calling to act in such a way, that truth and light, virtue and morality, veneration and love of the Most High be spread, and gain thereby the welfare and blessing of mankind.

"We cannot do this, however, if we adopt the notions of Mr. Jerome Cohen and his party, consisting of a few dozen men in this country, and even as much in Europe—to establish a Judaism without Judaism; because, apart from all regard to its contradiction in itself this system, has never had a salutary success. From the disciples of Rabbi Jesus Hanozri down to the Rabbis Holdheim and Einhorn it has ever proved a failure. We can do neither this, if we consign our spiritual life to rest and idleness, and abide by inherited obsolete forms in the midst of nature, surround-

ing us where everything develops itself and expands where everything lives and works.

“We cannot do this, if a vain presumption or prejudice prevents us from approving the modern inquiries in the province of truth, and make use of them in our life. We are only able to do it with assuring success by trying to penetrate into the divine words, into the Holy Scriptures, with the assistance of science and a profound talmudical knowledge, and by endeavoring to understand them correctly, and if we do not read them, as many simple and hasty men do usually, who read the Holy Scriptures on which depend everything in religion without sense and without applying their own reason, or as those, who are self sufficient, thinking, that they have studied so much Latin and Greek and so much philosophy of Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Schelling, etc.; that they do not need the ancient sources of illustrations, and understand the original Hebrew Bible better than the old Hebrews themselves; we can only promote Judaism and its influence upon the enlightened state of the human mind, if we study the sacred writings with meditation, taking to heart the word of the prophet Isaiah, xli 4:

“‘I am the Lord with the first, and with the last I am the same.’

“Should God treat us like a step-father? Surely not! He loves us not less than he loved our ancestors. We have to expect, as the prophet tells us, the same favor which he bestowed on them. We can see and hear God in the Holy Scriptures and in our hearts and minds, as they had seen and heard him. He has endowed us with the same talents and with the same spirits; nay, we have in some respects

more advantages than our forefathers had. We possess the experience, the mother of all wisdom and science, of several additional discoveries which they did not possess, and therefore we can more deeply penetrate into God's world, and understand it more correctly than they were able to do. And finally it is our sacred duty to listen to what the honest and truly learned men of modern times tell us and teach us, as it is correctly remarked in Midrash Rabbah Kohelet.

"Deut. xvii, 9 reads: 'And you shall come to the priests, Levites and to the judge, that shall be in those days as the same authority as the judge in the days of former times; because the priests, the Levites and the judges are the most learned men in our days and at all times.'

"Again *ibid*: 'Say not as regards the past, that the former days were better than the present.' Rabbi Simon, son of Lakish, said: 'You have only to mind the judge of your own time.'

"Or Rabbi Aba bar Kahana said: 'The generation coming in your days and the learned men in your time are of the same dignity as the past generation and the former sages were.'

"Every true Israelite must, therefore, long for the time when the second Conference or Synod will be held in this country, in order to show to the world by actions of that body that a true spirit animates and pervades us, and that we will understand our mission of making known the reasonable ideas of our sacred creed, and we do not doubt that every Jewish congregation will send delegates to participate

in the great cause of Israel in this glorious country of freedom, in this Palestine of all nations."

The Rabbi was delighted with the opportunity which now presented itself to him, to spread the religious reforms in the fast growing western states, which he had so nobly begun at Cleveland. On the first of May, 1857, he arrived in Milwaukee. He found the Jewish community there divided into two factions and worshipping in separate synagogues. His first efforts were directed towards uniting them. By dint of faithful perseverance he succeeded. The two factions became one strong religious congregation.

With their kind and energetic aid, Kalisch accomplished in a short time that which otherwise would have needed years to realize. They readily put themselves in harmony with their minister, accepted his innovations, and responded liberally when called upon to contribute towards the erection of a synagogue worthy of its membership. While Kalisch was engaged in his ministerial capacity in Milwaukee with unceasing devotion to the cause of Judaism, he nevertheless found time for literary work. He wrote numerous essays on religious subjects, maintained and carried on extensive religious controversies in the Jewish press, with the orthodox and ultra-reform elements in Judaism, and wrote poems which appeared at frequent intervals in various German periodicals.

One of the products of his earnest work was the organization among the Jewish women of Milwaukee, a society called "Die Treue Schwestern," whose object was purely benevolent. It became one of the largest benevolent or-

ganizations in Milwaukee and a model for similar groups in other communities.

Upon his demise, although absent for more than twenty-five years from the scene of his once busy labors, his grateful co-religionists did not forget their kind and warm-hearted leader, nor the labors he performed to alleviate the condition of misery and suffering. They manifested their sense of his loss in a grateful tribute to his memory.

Mention is made of this circumstance, because it is fast becoming an exception to the custom to recognize the services of those who have sacrificed fortune, comfort and health for the benefit of others after they are dead. And there are enough unprincipled men living who drink, and will continue to drink at the fountain of intellect of their co-laborers, appropriate their ideas, build their own prosperity upon the latter's drudgery, and when death strikes down the source of their physical and intellectual prop, it at once creates in their wily, unprincipled and selfish minds a blank, leaving no trace of their obligations, nor the slightest sense thereof to their benefactors. It should, therefore, afford pleasurable emotion to observe the humblest beneficial act or honorable deed properly recognized and appreciated.

Kalisch's intense love for religious liberty, and his zealous care of the honor and the future of the Jewish people, even to the most exacting minutiae, is signally illustrated by his criticism of the action of President James Buchanan, who in 1858, in sending a congratulatory message to Queen Victoria, used the term "All the nations of Christendom."

Kalisch's criticism evoked the following reply from President Buchanan:

WASHINGTON CITY, 11 September, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of the 5th instant, and permit me to say that in the construction of my answer to the Queen I think you are somewhat hypercritical. Most certainly I never intended by using the expression "all the nations of Christendom," to cast any reflection on the Jews. Such an idea never entered my mind. Both as President of the United States and as an individual, I have ever been the advocate of religious liberty and the perfect freedom of conscience. For many of your persuasion I entertain the highest personal regard, and I should be the last man in the world, either in an official document or a private letter, to use any expression derogatory to their character or calculated to wound their feelings.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

Rev. Dr. Isidor Kalisch.

Of interest, in this connection, is a letter Kalisch received from Gabriel Riesser, a reproduction and translation of which appear on pages 31 and 32.

Kalisch's religious work in Milwaukee was attended with marked success, and after three years of energetic and successful labor there, being eager to disseminate his liberal views far and wide, he bade adieu to his affectionate congregation, with mutual feelings of regret and sorrow, and entered the lecture field, delivering lectures and sermons in the principal cities throughout the United States. For more than a year he continued his itinerancy, until he finally yielded to the urgent solicitations of the Hebrew congregation of Indianapolis, Indiana, to become their rabbi and preacher. While stationed there he delivered his lecture on the "Source of All Civilization" before the Young Men's Literary Association, which was printed and speedily

ran through two large editions. In commenting upon this lecture, the historian and biographer, James Parton, in the August number of the "Atlantic Monthly," 1867, on page 245, says:

"We have, too, a lecture by another rabbi, Dr. Isidor Kalisch, before the Young Men's Literary and Social Union, of Indianapolis, which is bold even to audacity. He told the young gentlemen that the prevalence of Christianity in the Roman Empire was not an escape *from* barbarism, but a lapse *into* it. 'As soon,' said he 'as Christianity began spreading over the Roman Empire, all knowledge, arts and sciences died away, and the development of civilization was retarded and checked.' Of course any attempt to express the history of five centuries in twenty words must be unsuccessful. This attempt is: but the boldness of the opinion does not appear to have given offense. The learned doctor further gave his hearers to understand that knowledge is 'the source of all civilization, and theology the chief obstacle in its way.'"

Notwithstanding the opinion of so eminent a man as James Parton, that the attempt on the part of Kalisch to show that Christianity was at a certain period a stumbling block to knowledge, arts and sciences, was unsuccessful, yet no attempt was made by him or anyone else to refute the arguments adduced by Kalisch to sustain his view, nor was there any assertion or intimation by anyone that the facts presented by him to establish this view, were controvertible.

The learned and renowned liberal Moncure D. Conway expressed great admiration for this essay.

Kalisch remained at Indianapolis for nearly two years, and in August, eighteen hundred and sixty-four, he moved to Detroit, Michigan, where he ably and acceptably filled the station of rabbi and preacher of the congregation "Beth El" for three years. With a fair salary and a liberal and enlightened congregation to minister to, he was somewhat

relieved from the arduous labor which his duties in former places entailed upon him.

His liberal reforms were acquiesced in, harmony and brotherly feeling prevailed among the members of the congregation, and for the first time in many years, the boisterous sea upon which he had embarked became calm and serene. He found now ample leisure to more assiduously court the muses, with whom he loved so much to commune. Although, since his eighteenth year, Kalisch had written and published poems of great merit, and which evinced his pure and fervent imagination, his stern but true philosophy sparkling with studded gems of sublime thought, beautiful imagery and poetical warmth and feeling, yet he felt no jealous care to preserve and collect these products of genius for the delight of mankind, until he became satisfied that his religious work had been accomplished.

The looked for opportunity had arrived. In 1865, he published his German poems, entitled, "*Toene des Morgen-Landes*" (Sounds of the Orient), and which before the close of the year found a hearty reception among lovers of true and genuine poetry. In Germany, unstinted praise was awarded him for his meritorious labor, and his poems were warmly received and highly commented upon. From the literati in this country, he received the most flattering commendations of praise for his charming verse.

Above all, they possessed this singular merit: whether treating of a religious or secular subject, Kalisch never failed to give it a poetic touch, scrupulously careful, however, not to hide the light of truth, nor to obscure the moral.

Hamburg 27 November 1858
 from Dr. David Kalisch, Rabbi
 Mikwanitz W.

Ergebnis des 2ten Jahres

[illegible]

Ich wünsche mich sehr mit Ihnen zusammen zu
kommen. Ich bin in der That in Cincinnati und es ist
schon fast eine Woche, da ich dort angekommen bin;
ich habe mich sehr über das dortige Aussehen
sehr gefreut, und würde Sie, daß es eine neue
Welt für mich, wie auch für die dortigen
Freunde ist.

mit geschlossenen Gürtel

Graciously answered..

G. Prieser.

LETTER FROM GABRIEL RIESSER TO RABBI KALISCH
(Translation on page 32)

Hamburg, November 27, 1858.

To Dr. Isidor Kalisch, Rabbi,
Milwaukee, Wis.

Dear Sir:

On my return to Hamburg after a prolonged absence, I found your valued letter of the 18th of October together with the newspaper referred to. I thank you most heartily for this sign of your kind remembrance as indicated by this letter as well as for its contents.

Every man of honor will certainly greatly approve and appreciate your entering the lists with earnestness and zeal, when you believed our co-religionists had suffered an insult.

Whether there existed sufficient reason for such a misunderstanding in the present case, one may of course hold a different opinion; I confess that I myself am inclined to find the expression used by the President rather harmless, and I would hardly have taken offense at it. However, that is of secondary consideration. The main point is that every one should rise in his place where in his opinion an injustice has occurred; it is surely better that too much should be done in this direction than too little; and the satisfactory explanation which you finally received from the President proves sufficiently that your claims had been rightly appreciated and had not been considered improper.

I recall with great pleasure our meeting in Cincinnati and the pleasant days I spent there; therefore I was doubly glad of your kind remembrance of me and hope I may be permitted to meet you again some day.

With cordial greetings,

Yours faithfully,

G. RIESSER.



RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH IN 1864.

His verse is smooth and correct; his rhythm so consonant and charming as to enchant the senses; his descriptions are wonderfully realistic, and they lose none of the poetic fire by the use of a correct metre and pure rhythm. His poem "Die letzten Lebensmomente Moses," is vivid, replete with religious fervor, sympathetic and realistic to the end. Although treating upon the subject of death, the poet with a masterly hand sustains the mind through the solemn scene with beautiful sentiments of future life and everlasting bliss. How rarely do we find, the scholar, philosopher, painter, poet and theologian combined, each performing his own part in his line of vocation and duty at the same time, without any incongruousness? And what masterly and skillful hand does it not require to blend their works, so that each shall appear in its proper place, without the shadow of one obtruding on the other? In "Die letzten Lebensmomente Moses", religion, philosophy, poetry, and learning are found harmoniously blended together, and each receiving especial lustre from their happy and judicious juxtaposition.

His poems "Die mystische Harfe," "Der Teufelstein," "Gesicht der Seele," evince the highest order of poetic genius. The last mentioned poem stands unrivalled in the skill displayed by the poet in treating a philosophical and abstruse subject in a vivacious, charming, and interesting style without sacrificing truth to poetry, and at the same time investing every stanza with poetic eloquence. His religious poems and hymns are models of excellence, beauty, and fervent piety. Some of them have found their way in

the Union Prayer Book now in use by a majority of the Reform Congregations.

Several of Kalisch's poems show a keen sense of the humorous without betraying effort, but always reaching the mark intended. His vein of satire is also demonstrated by several of his latter poems, and at times it reaches a pungency, as causes the reader to wince, when he reflects upon the effect it must have had upon its intended victim.

The poetic genius of Kalisch did not only find expression in his German poems, but also in Hebrew ones.

After his death, among his manuscripts was found a considerable collection of original Hebrew poems, tales, fables, and translations from German and English poets into Hebrew, which have never appeared in print.

This short and imperfect attempt to portray the poetic genius of one who merely wrote poetry for the recreation it afforded him, can only give us a glimpse of the innate talent he possessed in that direction. It is to be deeply regretted that leisure and circumstances did not permit a fuller sway to his high-born talents, so that his gifted pen could have traced the feelings of mind, soul, and body to the widest extent of his noble inspirations.

No apology is necessary for this digression into a dissertation upon the poetic genius of, and the nature and character of, the literary labors performed by the subject of this sketch, because a man's soul is generally reflected in his works, and in order to properly understand the true nature and character of the man in review, we must examine the deeds which he has performed.

It will now become necessary to retrace our steps to

where Kalisch was left attending to the spiritual welfare of his congregation at Detroit. During his three years' sojourn there, he had acquired many earnest and admiring friends. His sermons which he delivered in German and English attracted large audiences, and promoted the best of feeling among the members of his congregation.

Notwithstanding the serenity and peacefulness of this condition of things, a restless ambition in the minister to spread his views and doctrines, as broadcast as his health and life would permit, caused him, in 1866, to accept a call from the Hebrew congregation of Leavenworth, Kansas.

No other motive but the irresistible desire of spreading the truth of his convictions, and to bring his co-religionists to the adoption of a Judaism, not founded upon empty forms and ceremonies, but upon substantial principles, could have prevailed upon Kalisch to sever his connection with a congregation whose members he had learned to respect and love, and whose trust and affection he firmly held.

In his new field of labor, Kalisch found hardly any obstacles in his way to bring about the necessary measures of reform. The little difficulties that did present themselves, he easily surmounted, through his indefatigable zeal and indomitable energy, and the activity and intelligence of the members of his congregation. He found the Leavenworth congregation flourishing and prosperous, and his advent in their midst gave them prominence among their sister congregations. During his residence there he employed his leisure hours in contributing interesting articles on Biblical and Talmudical topics to the Jewish press. He also commenced and finished a translation into English prose of

Lessing's "Nathan der Weise," which he soon after published in the city of New York.

Before commenting on the merits of the translation, it will be preferable to permit the translator to speak through his eloquent preface as to the causes which prompted him to undertake the task of translating so difficult a poem. He has embellished this preface with a translation from the German of the views of his admired and worthy friend, Dr. Gabriel Riesser, on the life and character of Lessing. Rabbi Kalisch says:

"A genuine seer and poet is the common property of all nations. His ideas, thoughts, words and doctrines ought, especially in our own progressive age, be known to all. And such a one was Gotthold Ephraim Lessing.

"He was a burning and shining light of such rare power and splendor, that it will warm the human heart and enlighten the spirit wherever a glimpse of it will be visible. He belongs, therefore, not to a particular age and nation, but to the whole human family of the present and future.

"He took to himself the whole armor of God, truth combined with tolerance, pressed forward manfully and tried to lead to the deep springs of universal religion, fed ever from the celestial heights of the Divine Nature, whence flows that mighty river of God, full of living water where all mankind may drink perennial supply.

"The particular circumstance, however, that Lessing put the luminous point of this poem in the character of a Jew, which gave much offense to the intolerance of his contemporaries as well as to that of later generations, dare not be passed over in silence. It must be admitted that herein the sublime idea of humanity and poetical justice was conceived. What nobler task can poetry as well as philanthropy assign to themselves, than that to heal the most painful wounds which hatred has inflicted, and to carry the light of human right and loving acknowledgement into the deepest night of a misjudging-hard-heartedness and blind prejudice?

"Lessing's muse has, therefore, selected Judaism for the cornerstone of the temple of reconciliation and philanthropy, because it suffered the longest and most severely by oppression, hatred, and

persecution. The poet let his Jew be the least and his Christian the most biased by his own prejudice."

Although a contemporaneous metrical translation of "Nathan der Weise," by Ellen Frothingham, made its appearance, the translation of Kalisch found unbounded favor and held undisputed sway. The translation was a complete success. With his usual characteristic fidelity, he remained faithful to the original text, and throughout was remarkably successful in preserving the author's spirit, intent, and meaning in pure and concise English.

It was October, 1868, when Kalisch left Leavenworth for New York City, for the purpose of publishing his translation of "Nathan der Weise" and also to open an educational institute. He did both. His translation he published at his own expense, and it yielded him a handsome profit. The educational institute he opened on West Thirty-sixth Street, in the Spring of 1869. Meeting with very little encouragement in his new enterprise, and after a year's trial, he abandoned it.

During this period he contributed a series of articles to Henry Ward Beecher's *Christian Union*, prominent among which were articles on the Talmud, "The Wine of the Bible," and "All Christians Astray on Baptism."

After relinquishing his educational institute, which had consumed all his earnings, Kalisch was once more compelled to enter the lecture field.

While on his lecturing tour he received a call from the congregation "Benai Abraham," of Newark, New Jersey, which he accepted. He remained with this congregation until August, 1872, when he left for Nashville, Tennessee,

to accept the position of rabbi and preacher of the congregation "Ohavey Scholom," for the term of three years. Here he performed most active and efficient work. He induced his congregation to erect a handsome synagogue suitable to their condition and want. The laying of the corner stone of this synagogue was attended with great pomp and ceremony. Among those who participated therein, were ex-President Andrew Johnson and the Governor and State Officials of Tennessee.

The result of Kalisch's labor in Nashville was to bring his co-religionists prominently before the public, and to dispel the general illusion, that the Jewish religion was an interminable barrier to social amenities with other creeds. His lecture on "Ancient and Modern Judaism" was a potent factor in this cause. This lecture was delivered in nearly every important city east of the Mississippi River, and was pronounced by Jew and Gentile to be a most lucid exposition of the creed of the modern Jew. On all sides it was admitted that its tendency was to help stifle the slumbering embers of prejudice, which were being occasionally fanned into life by the baneful breath of fanaticism. To more fully illustrate the lofty station which Kalisch desired to attain for Judaism, the introductory remarks to his lecture on "Ancient and Modern Judaism" will here be pertinent. He says:

"The subject which I propose to discuss, is 'Ancient and Modern Judaism.' I selected this topic, because living in a blessed country where free thought and free speech are realities and the minds of the masses of the people have been emancipated from the shackles of superstition and prejudice; and in an age when the sun of science, truth and righteousness has gradually dispelled the many



RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH IN 1870.



SARAH TOBIAS KALISCH,
MOTHER OF RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH.

clouds of errors, and is now enveloping and penetrating the hearts and feelings of mankind with its pristine brightness and magnificent glory, I believe it will be highly interesting and instructive to all the devotees of the different religious sects to behold how traditionalism, which is the foundation of all creeds of civilized nations, has been and is still undergoing a change by its respective adherents.

"Although modern Judaism differs in external religious forms, views and principles with Christianity, it is nevertheless joining hands with all those among all nations, who strive with renewed life and vigor to abandon all well-tried errors of the past, and to build up a temple wherein the whole human race shall be led to worship one Almighty God of righteousness and truth, goodness and love. Yes, it endeavors to be the foremost in the ranks of all those who hasten to usher in the golden age of a true universal brotherhood." *

Kalisch concluded this lecture with an admirable synopsis of the ideas, views and main principles of modern Judaism, all of which he summarized tersely in ten "articles." (See pp. 85-6.)

The noted orientalist and philosopher Franz Delitsch in his treatise, entitled, "Ernste Fragen an die Gebildeten jüdischer Religion," published by the "Centralbureau der Instituta Judaica (W. Faber)," at Leipzig, 1888, on page 38 says: Der am 9 Mai 1886 in Newark (Nordamerika) verstorbenen Rabbiner Dr. Isidor Kalisch, einer der begabtesten und thatkräftigsten Vertreter der Reform, hat in seinem Vortrage "Ancient and Modern Judaism" das Glaubensbekenntnis des modernen Judentums in zehn Sätze zusammengefasst, deren dritter lautet: "Die mosaische Religion ist eines unendlichen Fortschrittes fähig" Er. meint, damit ihre Fortbildung zu einer universellen Religion, etc. And on page 43: Der von Isidor Kalisch aufgestellte 10 Bekennt-

* This lecture appears in the present volume on pages 61-87.

nis satz lautet: "Israels heiliger beruf ist es, der elösende messias der menschheit zu werden."

The learned commentator makes a futile effort to attribute the progressive views enunciated by Rabbi Kalisch to the advent of Christianity and the teachings of Christ, for this concept of Professor Delitzsch finds no support from anything said by Rabbi Kalisch, but on the contrary the latter clearly demonstrates and states that the ten maxims are the corollary of the teachings of the prophets and wise men of Israel.

These bright nuggets from a mine of gold need no refiner's skill to bring out their value. They have passed through the smelting furnaces of philosophy, science and civilization. They are pure and unalloyed. And now it behooves the candid reader to judge of the character of that workman who lifted his anvil to break the shackles of religious hate, prejudice and difference, who labored not only for the race to which he belonged, but for the whole human family, and who spent the best days of his life in projecting a system of religion broad and liberal enough for all mankind, and which in the course of time will eventuate into an universal acceptance.

In September, 1875, Kalisch severed his connection with the Nashville congregation and returned to Newark. He devoted himself mainly to the lecture field and literary work. Of the lectures which he delivered from 1874 to 1878, the best known are "Divine Providence," "Ancient and Modern Judaism," "The Origin of Language" "Jewish Ethics," and "Life and Works of Moses Maimonides."

The immense amount of literary labor performed by

Kalisch from the time of the publishing of his "Guide" in 1853 up to the year 1878, is simply remarkable. It must not be forgotten that from 1850 up to 1861, Kalisch was constantly in charge of some congregation, which required all his time and attention. Besides performing the duties of minister, he was required daily, Saturday and Sunday excepted, to teach the children of the members of his congregation Hebrew and German, in the school attached to the synagogue. Notwithstanding this exacting work, the Jewish newspapers and periodicals published in this country from 1853 up to 1861, are replete with many learned controversies on Biblical, Talmudical, ceremonial and ritualistic questions, sustained by Kalisch with a research and exhaustiveness which prove his extensive and profound learning and patient and incessant toil and labor; with essays on various topics, such as "Origin of the Doctrine of Demons and Evil Spirits Taught by Judaism, and Christianity Illustrated;" "Opinions on the Value of the Talmud by the Most Learned Christian Theologians;" "On the Sphere of Our Activity as Israelites;" "The Old Biblical Doctrine of the Idea of God;" "On the Science of Education," etc. It was during this period that he wrote and published in the Jewish press a biography of Moses Maimonides and of Naftaly Hartwig Wessely, besides contributing numerous German essays and poems to the *Deborah*. In 1877, he published an elaborate English translation of "Sepher Yezirah, a Book on Creation, or the Jewish Metaphysics of Remote Antiquity," with preface, explanatory notes and glossary, together with a "Sketch of the Talmud." In the preface to "Sepher Yezirah," Kalisch

says: "This metaphysical essay, called 'Sepher Yezirah,' (book on creation, or cosmogony) which I have endeavored to render into English, with explanatory notes, is considered by all modern literati as the first philosophical book that ever was written in the Hebrew language." He then proceeds to give a highly interesting and instructive account of the antiquity of the book, its numerous ascribed authors, and its learned and able commentators. The antiquity and authorship of "Sepher Yezirah" has always been a matter of considerable speculation, but the translator, in his admirable preface thereto, in a scholarly and painstaking manner reviews the opinions of his predecessors on this doubtful question, and with perspicuity demonstrates the errors into which they have fallen in coming to their conclusions. (See pages 344-50.)

The translator has enriched this book with valuable notes, which evince a thorough understanding of his subject, profound erudition, exhaustive research and arduous labor. In this volume appeared Kalisch's "Sketch of the Talmud" and reprinted on pages 282-312. His reasons for writing this essay are lucidly and earnestly stated in the prefatory remarks on pages 282-3.

The translation of "Sepher Yezirah" was followed in 1878 by his English rendering from the original of the Hebrew autobiography of Rabbi Yom Tob Lipman Heller, published serially in the "Jewish Record" of Philadelphia. In 1881, Kalisch translated Professor Salomon Munk's celebrated "*Philosophie et Ecrivains Philosophie les Juifs*", Paris, 1849. ("Philosophy and Philosophical Authors of the Jews, an Historical Sketch) in which he added the notes

from the German edition of B. Baer and a number of his own.

Kalisch, who had always heretofore enjoyed the best of health, and extremely careful and regular in his habits, was in November of the same year attacked by a malignant abscess, supplemented by an apopleptic stroke nearly costing him his life, and confined him to his room for months.

He was then warned by his physician to desist from all mental labor and seek rest. But this advice did not accord with the disposition of Kalisch, who could never remain idle. Despite the warning voice of his physician, he conducted the religious services of his former congregation, "B'nai Abraham," upon holidays and other occasions, and instructed the children of the members thereof in the principles of Judaism, at the Sabbath School, without compensation, and this he continued to do until his physical ailments confined him to his house.

Unmindful of the fact that mental labor placed him in a state of great danger, and although his health had been to some extent shattered through the severe illness which he had undergone, he deemed it his sacred duty to add to the many useful labors which he had so well performed, the arduous task of translating "Ha-Tapuach" (The Apple), from the Hebrew into English, a treatise on the immortality of the soul, ascribed to Aristotle the Stagyrte, adding thereto valuable notes and aphorisms, in order that atheism may receive a check, and skeptics be furnished with convincing arguments on the immortality of the soul. This translation was made in 1882, and was published by the "American Hebrew," of New York City, in 1885. The

religious and secular press universally commended the translation.

The labor performed by Kalisch on this, his last contribution to literature, resulted in a severe stroke of paralysis on the 30th of May, 1883, and from which he never fully recovered. Before closing the account of the literary work performed by Kalisch, a list of some of his most important essays, monographs, translations, discourses, disquisitions and controversies, and not already alluded to, will not prove uninteresting. In 1851 and 1852, he published in the Jewish magazine, "Occident," at Philadelphia, a series of "Exegetical Lectures on the Bible;" in 1854 and 1855, he published in the "American Israelite," "Contributions to Philosophical Literature," with valuable notes, which show his extensive and intimate knowledge of astronomy, mineralogy, chemistry, physiology and medicine, and "Prefatory Remarks to the Book of Esther;" in 1857 "The Book of Antiochus," translated from the Hebrew; in 1859, "A Disquisition Concerning the Time of Composing the Accents of the Hebrew;" in 1863, "Hebrew Literature and Proselytism according to Biblical Talmudical Laws;" in 1866, "A Discourse on the Preference of the Mosaic Law," delivered at Saragossa before King James and high officers of Aragonia, in the year 1263, by Rabbi Moses Ben Nachman, translated from the Hebrew; in 1866, "Contributions to the History of the Jewish Liturgy;" in 1870, "Historical Researches. Who was Tryphon, mentioned by Justin the Martyr. The Origin of the Christian Trinity. What the Heathen Thought of Christianity when Ushered in." In 1880, "Disquisition of Some Litur-

gical Subjects;" "The Value of the Hebrew Language" and "Real Treasures of Earth." These last two were written and published in German in a companion sheet.

In 1870, "The Jewish Messenger" published his English sermon, "Timely Words," and in 1871, under the caption of "The Best Productions of the Jewish Pulpit," etc., published his English sermon in full, entitled, "Excellence of Judaism."

On the 22nd of March, 1867, there appeared in the "London Jewish Chronicle and Hebrew Observer," his contributions to Talmudical lexicography, and subsequently on the 14th of October, 1880, further contributions to Talmudical lexicography appeared in the "Jüdische Literatur Blatt," Magdeburg, Germany.

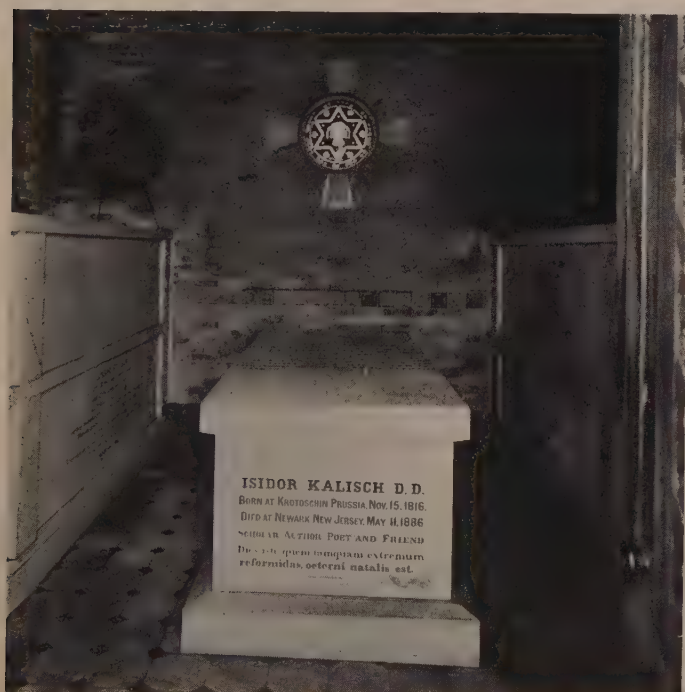
The "Zeitgeist," published in Chicago, contained an interesting article on March 30, 1882, from Kalisch's pen, entitled, "The Jewish Minister as He Should Be." He also in 1882, contributed several interesting articles in Hebrew to the "Beth Talmud," a Hebrew periodical published in Vienna, Austria.

As a polemic writer he stood in the first rank. His controversy with Isaac Leeser, which arose out of Kalisch's learned and elaborate criticism of Leeser's English version of the Bible, caused a furor. He was subsequently involved in another controversy with Leeser, respecting the Jewish belief in a personal Messiah. Kalisch vigorously and convincingly combatted the theory of a personal Messiah, while Leeser and his orthodox colleagues strongly and obstinately maintained the opposite. Kalisch's views on this matter can be gathered from a perusal of his lecture,

"Ancient and Modern Judaism." (See pages 61-87.) The views then expressed by Kalisch on the Jewish Messianic belief are those which are now generally entertained by enlightened Jewry.

His close application to literary labors, resulted in the most serious consequences.

In the winter of 1885, his health began to fail rapidly. He realized the fact that his career on earth would soon come to a close. He cheerfully contemplated the future, and calmly and patiently awaited the end. Notwithstanding that at times he was subjected to great physical suffering, he was never heard to complain, but always retained a cheerfulness and buoyancy of manner, so as to inspire hope and confidence in those near and dear to him, that his life would be spared for many days to come. These illusory hopes, however, were speedily dispelled. All human aid and skill could not halt the march of the dread conqueror—Death. On the 9th of May, 1886, he was stricken with apoplexy, and remained in a state of unconsciousness until his death, which occurred two days later, on the 11th of May, at three o'clock in the morning, in the presence of all the immediate members of his family. He was survived by his widow (née Adelaide Baer, whom he married in New York in 1864), five sons, Albert, Leonard, Samuel, Abner, and Burnham, and a daughter, Hannah Kalisch Wiener. The funeral obsequies took place on the fourteenth of May, and were imposing and impressive. Rabbi Gustave Gottheil, of New York City, delivered the funeral oration. Rabbi Kalisch's mortal remains are in a mausoleum at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Newark, N. J., bordering



EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF THE KALISCH MAUSOLEUM AT
 MT. PLEASANT CEMETERY, NEWARK, N. J.

the Passaic River, which he loved so much. The burial ground was consecrated by the Rev. Mr. Hahn of Newark. Kalisch's widow died in 1897 at Newark, having been a loyal helpmate and a kind mother.

Kalisch's death created a profound feeling of grief and sorrow in the community where he lived, and in every community where his many excellent qualities were known. The news of his death spread rapidly, and his life and labors were commented upon at length, in the leading journals of this country and Europe. In literary circles, the news of his death was received with unfeigned sorrow. Outside of a very valuable library, Kalisch left no worldly goods, but he left a far greater treasure than riches—an untarnished name and an enviable fame. To posterity, he bequeathed a useful and instructive literature; to the literary world, his many prose and poetic writings; to Judaism, a system of religion, which is destined to become the corner-stone of a universal brotherhood.

We may say of Kalisch, in the language of the poet:

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
And he whose heart beats quickest lives the longest,
Lives in an hour more than in years do some
Whose fat blood sleeps as it slips along the veins.
Life is but a means unto an end; that end,
Beginning, mean, and end to all things, God."

Kalisch was a fearless, conscientious and laborious minister, whose paramount design in life was to perform his duties with scrupulous fidelity, and with a sole view to a

sensible and reasonable exposition of the Mosaic Law. He desired his co-religionists to share with him the fruits of the Mosaic teaching, and to lop off the useless branches and decayed twigs under which they are hidden. He fiercely combatted those ultra-reformers who desired to destroy every vestige of the Mosaic Law and to weaken the position of Judaism among its sister religions.

From their blinded eyes he tore the veil of arrogance and jealousy, and pointed out to them that ultra-reformism meant death to Judaism, and was welcome to Atheism and Christianity. It was a bitter and fierce war which the champion of Reform Judaism waged against his misguided ultra-reform brethren. At the same time an equally fierce conflict was sustained by Kalisch, with the orthodox element in Judaism, which was then strongly entrenched in this country. His attack upon useless, idolatrous and heathenish ceremonies, they denounced as heresies. They belabored him with bitter personalities; so enveloped were their minds in Egyptian darkness, that they were unable to perceive the distinction between form and substance. Their envenomed shafts failed of their mark. The armour of truth and righteousness repelled them, and their base assaults upon him, merely exhausted their own strength and ammunition. Their adherents deserted them, and gradually they became reconciled to the progress of truth and enlightenment. Out of these conflicts, Kalisch emerged with glory. The enemies of Judaism had been vanquished. For Kalisch considered the conformer to the ancient orthodox forms, ceremonies, and rites, as great an enemy to Judaism, as the ultra-reformer who is intent upon eradicating every

principle upon which Judaism is founded; the former, said he, is given to idolatry and heathenish customs, which, if unrestrained, will eat out the heart of Judaism, while the latter is rushing headlong to Atheism.

Kalisch was tenacious of opinion, but never willingly at the expense of truth and justice. He was open to conviction, but he obstinately resisted all attempts to force him to accept theories founded on precedents, unless they were also in accord with true reason. He held the Jewish commentators in high veneration, but his veneration did not assume the shape of idolatrous respect; for he freely criticised, where he deemed criticism necessary, and often pointed out that certain theories entertained and promulgated by them, were the off-spring of necessity, and even emergency, and therefore became and were useless, when the cause which called them into being, had ceased to exist.

It was this candid spirit of criticism which involved him in the fierce religious controversies referred to. It was this candid spirit of criticism which rendered inestimable services for the cause of Judaism, and it was this self-same spirit which raised up against him a small army of puerile minds who resorted to misrepresentation for want of argument, in order to stem the salutary changes, which were rapidly taking place in Judaism, under his earnest and effective ministrations.

He planted the seed of reform in sturdy but uncongenial soil; under his parental and tender care it soon took root; he watched its growth with patient vigils and earnest solicitude; he saw it a sapling bending before ruthless winds

and devastating storms; but it grew and grew, until it reached such gigantic dimensions and proportions, as to defy wind and weather, and bid fair to become a sheltering refuge for all mankind.

Before concluding this sketch of Kalisch's rabbinical and literary career, it should be mentioned that he was made a member of the "Deutsche Morgenlaendische Gesellschaft," on April 12, 1879, and of the Mendelssohn Verein, at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, in the same year, and of the "Allgemeiner Deutscher Schriftsteller Verband," Leipzig, on March 12, 1881.

Kalisch took a deep interest in all sciences, and therefore he never ceased to be a student. Well versed in many ancient and modern languages, he pursued the subjects of his investigations in all their ramifications. An example of the versatility of his genius and the vast amount of useful learning stored within his capacious brain, is illustrated by two treatises found among his manuscripts on Mathematics, one as a guide for teachers and the other for students. Rabbi Kalisch was also deeply interested in music; he played the violin accompanied on the guitar by his wife Charlotte.

One paramount aim seems to run through all his writings and labors, that of mental and moral improvement. When it is considered how unprofitable, in a financial sense, such labors are, in a busy world wholly devoted to racing after wealth, one cannot but admire the nobleness, unselfishness, and self-sacrificing character of the subject of this memoir. He despised wealth, and sacrificed all the years of an active life, in attempting to better the moral

and mental condition of his fellow men. He wilfully and manfully put on the armor of truth and justice, not merely defensively, but aggressively, to carry on the battle of truth against falsehood, hypocrisy, deceit, fanaticism, bigotry and superstition—a war in which no flag of truce can be recognized, no quarter given—a war of reason against blind faith and sophistry.

His life was devoid of every selfish thought; his soul was inwrought in the welfare of others; his greatest happiness was to observe others happy, and his greatest triumph was to see truth, justice, virtue and enlightenment, triumph over falsehood, oppression, vice and bigotry. Dependent upon his vocation and literary labors for his livelihood, and with a family dependent upon him, he rather struggled for existence, than to sacrifice his opinions and resort to dissimulation. He did not seek after wealth, but that which was dearer to him, the establishment of a Judaism which would be impregnable to the insidious attacks of scoffers and atheists.

He was a man of original thought. He took great delight in grappling with abstruse questions of mental and moral philosophy, theology, or any other subject which called for the vigorous exercise of his strong intellectual faculties. He was never happier than when his mind was so engaged. His power of analysis was so strongly developed, that a subject fell apart, as it were, into many pieces, with mathematical exactness and evenness under his keen dissection, and not the smallest particle thereof escaped his mental grasp, until it fully revealed its integral existence and relation to the whole. He furthermore possessed the happy

faculty of investing the most intricate subject in a simple garb, so that it could be readily understood by the common mind. This happy faculty stands prominent in his writings on theological subjects, lectures and sermons. A strong sense of right and justice pervaded all his actions through life. In truth, the sense of right and justice, was a prominent trait in his character. So strongly was he imbued with this quality, that it produced in him an uncontrollable aversion towards dissemblers and pretenders, and which his open and ingenuous nature was powerless to conceal. In the presence of such, his usual calm and even temperament, his urbane and genial manner, would become uneasy, ruffled and repelling. He seemed to have an intuitive knowledge if any of such were in his company, and he would unerringly single out the objectionable person who, would speedily learn that his presence was irksome. Kalisch was conscious of this innate gift and oftentimes in a spirit of charity and love, attempted to control it, but it would not submit to human dictation. It asserted its dominion most conspicuously in his sermons, where coupled with his excellent judgment of human nature, it rendered his portraitures of men and their characters most real and life-like. This trait of character was admittedly not conducive to hasty and indiscriminate friendships, but it performed a worthier and nobler office; it more firmly knitted the bonds of friendship with all true and loyal men who appreciated and estimated character at its true value. That it should seek its counterpart among men, is simply natural.

A strong illustrative corroboration of this statement, was found by the writer in the private correspondence, cover-

ing a period of years, between Kalisch and his life-long friend, the late Prof. Gustav Valentin, of Berne, Switzerland, the eminent and world renowned physiologist, from which many an useful and instructive lesson of true friendship may be culled.

When not engaged in the pursuit of his calling or literary work, his great pastime was to spend his leisure moments in reading. His favorite German authors, were Herder, Fichte, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Heine and Boerne; and his English were Milton, Shakespeare, Bulwer, and Carlyle.

He heeded no exertion, shunned no fatigue when bent upon a mission of mercy or charity. In the family circle he was perpetual sunshine. He was all love, patience, and generosity. He was a kind and devoted husband, a loving and affectionate father, and a steadfast friend. He had nearly reached the allotted age of man. To him the approach of death was only the beginning of that spiritual life, which was the theme of his earnest life work. No man was ever better prepared for the end than he. At day-break, just as the glow of the horizon foretold the coming of the majestic King of Light, and had changed Night's black mantle into a robe of gold, his spirit departed to those realms of everlasting light and bliss, there to reap its share of reward, which is due to those who lead an useful, upright, and moral life.

In 1886, Samuel Kalisch, son of Rabbi Kalisch, published anonymously a memoir on his father, entitled, "In Memoriam." This small volume was cordially received and commented upon by the press and scholars throughout the

world. Thus did Professor Henry Zirndorf, eminent as rabbi and scholar, write in "Deborah" on the occasion of the publication of "In Memoriam":

"We are fulfilling an unpleasantly belated but fortunately still timely duty of friendship and reverence in dedicating a memorial page to this unforgettable man, mighty with voice and pen. Dr. Isidor Kalisch was one of those unusual persons in whom the writer and the professional man are happily combined, who are eloquent not only on the Sabbath, amiable not only at the festive table and who are generous not only in the Lodge and at the Charity-Meeting. He wrote many good, instructive books and they were put as the finest tribute under the pillow on which the head of this thinker now rests in eternal sleep; yet one had the impression that he could have written and told still more and that by reason of the exigencies of the world and time the best that was in his heart had really often to remain unsaid. Not that he lacked courage to proclaim his freest thoughts; for few have carried their heads freer, more at their ease and more serenely, and few have paid a greater price for their convictions. Of this the wanderings of his varied and yet so harmonious existence are a living proof. For though his was a kind of Ibn Ezra nature which drove him to offer his instruction in more than one place and in more than one circle of pupils, yet there lay a further reason for these travels and changes of scene in his sincere striving for reform, though it could not but be that this enlightened leader was thrown into creditable conflict with the coarser elements of his congregation.

There was about him an aura of nobility and inspirational power which never found complete expression in his books, sermons, and in the lecturer's chair. He taught the big and small children; he read his broad-minded treatises evenings in the lecture-room, and aimed at a tasteful expression of his thoughts which refused to be imprisoned in narrow forms; but still he had sufficient mental supply for conversation and the circle of his friends, when his beautifully cut countenance shone with a singular light, and even when the lips were silent the expressive eyes were always full of kind feeling. To be sure, men of his caliber cannot easily satisfy all their neighbors: knowledge of one's value is mistaken for selfishness, zeal for the truth for dogmatism, noble indignation against baseness for polemic harshness. But, good heavens, what sort of selfishness is this which has retained nothing in two generations of life and teaching, as is told in the Memoir, but "a valuable library!" It almost seems as if in regard to worldly things he possessed that childlike mind by which we recognize the Ibn Ezras and the guiding master-spirits of all times as by a family trait.

Boston, March 15th.
1887

My dear Sir

I do not know
whom to thank for the
copy of "In Memoriam" - the
Memor. of Rev. Dr. John Kalisch

I thank you, at a venture
for this Memor. which I have
found very interesting, and
am glad to possess as a
memento of an admirable man
and enlightened scholar

Very truly Yours,

O. W. Holmes.

LETTER FROM OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO SAMUEL KALISCH
ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF HIS "IN MEMORIAM."

At first I was really minded to altogether disregard in this short memoir the books and other data in the life of this thinker and restrict myself to my personal acquaintance with the sainted teacher; to my intuition, so to speak. We live so restlessly the year round in the perpetual strife of literary things and parties that such an unprejudiced contemplation makes almost a comfortable rest possible. I would then have related what a dear guest Isidor Kalisch, then 64 years old, had been in my house, and his always animated letters the energetic handwriting of which at once showed an irrepressible youthful strength, would have completed the picture. But this memoir, the product of a pen inspired as it seems, with warm filial love, rises far above the level of a family publication meant for smaller circles. It is not the corner stone, for this the teacher of Newark has laid himself, but it is an essential stone to the monument of a lovable man.

Fate has done for Kalisch many a thing which helped to console him for his meagre church livings and ungrateful congregations; it has secured for him an honored memory which cannot be wholly explained by his mastery of languages including Phœnician, and his talmudic and biblical knowledge. An Arabian sheik once put before the poet Ludwig August Frankl the riddle how a man could attain fame. Of the different conditions which the son of the desert required, the Viennese lyrist stated only two in his letter: a good book and a good son. Hail to thee, therefore, brave preacher and apologist of the old science of living, to whom it was given to live so beneficially and so enduringly. The torch lowered by sombre Thanatos to a hissing extinction shines anew in the reverence of his house and kin and shows us traits to which his passing lends perfection and completeness.

This memorial leads us into very grateful details. Isidor Kalisch was born in November, 1816, in Krotoschin, and, deceased the 11th of May, 1886, almost completing his 70th year. We follow him in his earthly pilgrimage through the Talmud school, we accompany him to the colleges of Berlin, Breslau and Prague, and we are witnesses of his first journalistic and scientific successes. We agree with all assertions and conclusions of the biographer, which, as is the nature of such writings, often lend to special things a too great dimension; but a courageous, persevering mental activity is put everywhere before our eyes with a distinctiveness which deserves our heartiest thanks.

In August, 1849, our sainted teacher landed in New York and carried on his comprehensive educational work in a large number of prominent congregations: Cleveland, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Detroit, Leavenworth, Newark and Nashville, and on a great number of lecture platforms. Nevertheless this free land never became an Eldorado for him; not quickly did he reap his

reward and success. But in his house and heart well-being and prosperity enough for modest wishes was granted him, and in his conscience the knowledge of duty faithfully performed. Thus he wanders forth to the boundaries of aspiration and mortality; and this country to which he leaves his ashes owes him now the duty to keep carefully his memory as long as possible and to guard against caprices of taste and trivial forgetfulness."

Augustus Walters, widely known as literature and dramatic critic, wrote in the "Newark Journal" of January 7, 1887:

"An elegant memorial brochure has just appeared in honor of the Rev. Mr. Kalisch of this city. Though no author's name is appended, I presume it is the work of Mr. Samuel Kalisch, and the profoundly reverent and filial spirit evinced is alike creditable to the living and the dead. Nothing in the entire Scriptures is more touching than the simple fiat, "Honor thy father and thy mother." From this narrative it would appear that the late venerable rabbi was by no means estimated at his full worth—the usual mournful fate of that limited band of immortals who are by no means content to be mere scholars and poets, but who aim at being moral and theological reformers. Men who, for the sake of humanity, prefer the arid and thorny paths of indigence and honor to the rose-strewn walks of wealth and popularity. But as Feuerbach says: "Let the fanatic make disciples as the sand on the seashore; the sand is still sand; mine be the pearl—a judicious friend." The following extracts have the positive ring of genuine eloquence:

'Who is there adequate to the task of faithfully portraying the character of a man whose life was devoid of every selfish thought, whose soul was inwrought in the welfare of others, whose greatest happiness was to see others happy, and whose greatest triumph was to see truth, justice, virtue and enlightenment triumph over falsehood, oppression, vice and bigotry? If such there be, then to him let the task be allotted of doing justice to the memory of Dr. Isidor Kalisch.

'At daybreak, just as the glow of the horizon foretold the coming of the majestic King of Light, and had changed night's black mantle into a robe of gold, his spirit departed to the realms of bliss.'"

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise in a leading editorial in his paper "The American Israelite" of September 7, 1888, under the

heading, "Ethical Culture and the Late Isidor Kalisch," said in part:

"Shortly before his death the Rev. Isidor Kalisch sent us the first of a series of articles on the doctrines of the Ethical Culture Society. Before he could continue his proposed series he, by sickness, was disabled to write and soon after died. We propose to publish his sentiments on this subject as a supplement to the book which his son Samuel published as a memorial volume, in which, strange to say, the son did not express the sentiments, connections, relations, and the main work of his father's life. He took the deceased out of Jewish society and the work in Judaism, while Isidor Kalisch was first and last a Jew and his connection with the world's literature was purely accidental, as the volumes of the "American Israelite," which Mr. Kalisch ignored, fully testify. On the subject of our caption, however, the late Rev. Isidor Kalisch, to our knowledge, never expressed his opinion publicly, although he had done so on almost every question of reform in Judaism which agitated the public mind ever since the year 1854, and was present in almost every rabbinical conference from the first in Cleveland in 1855 to the gathering in Detroit in 1882."

Biographical sketches of Kalisch appeared in the following publications: "Der Deutsche Pioneer," Cincinnati, June, 1873, p. 117; "Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine," Aug., 1886, p. 178, with wood cut portrait; "The Jewish Encyclopedia," New York, 1904; "Cyclopedia of New Jersey," edited by Mary Depue Ogden, Newark, 1915, vol. ii, pp. 331-35; "Hebrews of the New World," published by Henry Whitmore & Co., New York, 1897 (pp. 230-31); "Reminiscences of Isaac M. Wise," Cincinnati, 1901; "Genealogical and Memorial History of New Jersey," by Francis Bazby Lee, New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1901, vol. iii, pp. 1067-9; Whitehead's "Judicial and Civil History of New Jersey," Boston Historical Company, 1897, pp. 539-40; Encyclopedia Britannica, xith edi-

tion; Isaac Markens', "Hebrews in America"; White's, "National Cyclopedia of American Biography," 1893, vol. iii, p. 63; Kirschner's "Litteratur Kalendar," Stuttgart, 1884, p. 126.

ANCIENT AND MODERN JUDAISM *

The subject which I propose to discuss is "Ancient and Modern Judaism." I selected this topic because living in a blessed country where free thought and free speech are realized and the minds of the mass of the people have been emancipated from the shackles of superstition and prejudice, and in an age when the sun of science, truth and righteousness, dispelling gradually all the clouds of errors is pouring down its magnificent glory upon our hearts and feelings, I believe, that it will be highly interesting and instructive to all the devotees of the different religious sects to behold how traditionalism which is the foundation of all creeds of civilized nations has been and is still undergoing a considerable change by its adherents. Although Jews differ in external religious forms, in views and principles with their Christian brethren, they are, nevertheless, joining hands with all those among all nations who strive with renewed life and vigor to abandon all well-tried errors of the past and to build up a temple wherein the whole human race shall be led to worship one Almighty God of righteousness and truth, goodness and love. Yes, they endeavor to be the foremost in the ranks of all those who hasten to usher in the golden age of a true universal brotherhood.

*Lecture delivered at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1874, and soon after in every important city east of the Mississippi River.

There are a great many clergymen and laymen, literate and illiterate, who are accustomed to think and to speak of the Israelites generally as Mosaic Jews as if they were identical at all times; but I can not help remarking, that they are laboring under a great mistake and are harboring a phantom. Because as we distinguish the many parts of a tree, viz.: the root, the trunk, the bark, the twigs, the leaves, the buds, the blossoms and the fruits, exactly so we have to view the tree of religion planted by Moses.

It was subject to continual vicissitudes of time and circumstances when it was growing up in different ages.

Mosaism as contained in the Pentateuch is merely the godly sapling of revealed, and as some call it, traditional religion, and Judaism is one of its oldest fruits, that was ripening through three thousand years.

Hence there is a remarkable difference between Mosaism, old and new or between ancient and modern Judaism.

It can hardly be better represented than by imagining an Israelitic worshipping congregation in the time of Moses standing before a movable tent in the Arabian desert, called the Tabernacle of the Lord, and Aaron, the High-priest slaying and burning different animals for sin and peace offering and sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices upon the altar or around about it, and while the fire is burning and consuming the offerings upon it the people shouting and falling upon their faces expressing thus their piety and divine animation (Lev. ix). And then again by visualizing a modern worshipping Jewish congregation assembled in one of the magnificent temples of modern times, as for instance, those of Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, etc., in

Europe, or of New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Cleveland, etc., or in the temples of this city, with their splendid organs pealing forth with human voice the inspiring and sweet strains of the heavenly musical compositions of the great masters, Meyerbeer, Halévi, Mendelssohn-Bartholdi, Sulzer and others, accompanied by a choir praying and singing heart and soul stirring hymns that raise the most phlegmatic upon the pinions of devotion to the Most High, and listening with devotional feelings to the prayers and sermons of the modern Rabbis.

Looking at these two pictures we cannot help asking: Are these Jewish worshippers in modern temples the same followers of the old Mosaic dispensation? Are these the children of the old biblical Scriptures? Is there any opposition between Old and New Judaism? Is the genius of the New Judaism vested with the same Divine power as the Old? Has the Hebrew mind so far advanced in our days as that of the prophets and the sweet Psalmists in their times? Does it lead to the highest and most blissful religious life and liberty? These are questions of high importance; for we know what the genius of Mosaism has done.

It has produced three wonderful huge fruits, namely: Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, that are nourishing all civilized nations. Such a tree of life and vigor might also produce a still riper fruit which will nourish all mankind.

In our inquiry as to the difference between the Old and New Judaism, it may prove serviceable to exhibit a general view of the history of the Jewish religion.

The Mosaic dispensation commonly called the Jewish religion or Judaism, although both are considered as being one and the same, are, as I have already remarked, by no means identical.

Judaism is a progressive Mosaic system.

And yet, although New Judaism is in many respects in contrast with the Old, it is nevertheless not in opposition to it.

The followers of New Judaism are the very same as those of the Old; but living in later times, they are therefore exercising a spiritual power, vitality, supereminence and manhood, that belong to art and science of modern time.

Hence, let us endeavor to represent the different stages which the Mosaic system had to pass through from its very beginning, that we may be enabled to understand correctly the present Jewish aspirations.

MOSAISM

When the Israelites just emerged from Fetishism and Polytheism and an Israelitic empire was to be established as a Theocracy the following Mosaic system prevailed. Jehovah is the sole Creator, Supreme Lord and possessor of heaven and earth, the Father of all nations of whom Israel is the first born, as it is evident by the following passages: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and all that is in them (Ex. xx, 11). Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also with all that therein is (Deut. x, 14). Again: Thus says the Lord: Israel is my son, even my first born (Ex. iv, 22). Hence as Israel is the first born the other nations are

younger children, but children still of a common father. Israel on account of his primogenitureship was chosen all alone to be His priest and His holy people, as it reads Ex. xix, 16. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

This statement is also repeated in Deut. xxvi, 18 and 19 and *ibid.* iv, 19 and 20, etc.

All other nations, however, He placed under the guardianship of inferior deities as it is explicitly expressed, Deut. iv, 19: "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all hosts of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them which the Lord thy God has divided unto all nations under the whole heaven." The Talmud (Megillah, 96) remarks, that this verse contains such a strong justification of the idolatrous worship of the heathen, that the seventy-two interpreters who translated the Bible into Greek by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 270 or 280 before the Common Era, thought it advisable to alter this passage. Still there is another passage, Deut. xxix, 26, where the same idea of the existence of inferior gods that should be worshipped by the nations is repeatedly expressed; but as it was not reported to have been altered by the Septuagint, it has probably been overlooked.

Jehovah has a preeminence above the gods of all other nations, as it is stated Ex. xii, 12, "and against all the Gods of Egypt I will execute judgment, I am the Lord" (see Num. xxxiii, 4) and *ibid.* xv, 11, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the Gods?" Or Deut. x, 17, "For the

Lord your God is God of Gods and Lord of Lords, a great God, etc."

This opinion was still cherished during the times of Psalmists as it reads xcvi, 7 . . . "worship him all ye Gods." Again lxxvi, 8, "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord." Or *ibid.* xcv, 3, "For the Lord is a great God, and a King above all gods."

From all these passages it is clear as noon-day that the idea of the existence of deities reigning and powerful although inferior to Jehovah was entertained at that time.

No sophist can even by the most illaquate eloquence and scholastic quibbles explain this away, otherwise how could it be said: "Jehovah executed judgment against the gods of Egypt" (Num. xxxiii, 4), or how could he be a "God of gods," or why they said of him, "Who among gods is like unto our God," or: "Worship him ye gods" or he is "a great King above all gods." These gods were obviously not thought of as chimeras or creations of the brain or to be of mere wood and stone, but as beings who differed from Jehovah rather in degree than in kind. They were considered subordinate deities.

This was also the reason why the ancient Israelites were constantly falling into the error of running after the gods of other nations. (Compare Jer. xlv, 15-20.)

Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the most high God, above time and space (Ex. iii, 14), an everlasting (*ibid.* 15), an invisible and incomprehensible being and any man who would see him must die. (Ex. xxxiii, 20; xxxiv, 5.)

It is remarkable, that this idea was also entertained by

the ancient Greeks and is expressed in Homer's Iliad: "The Gods are dangerous to appear visibly."

The attributes of Jehovah are: infinity, mercy and grace, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. (Ex. xxxiv, 6 and 7.)

Sometimes they are expressed in an anthropomorphic manner (Ex. xxxii, 11 and 14; Num. xvii, 11 and *ibid.* xxv, 11) that is from a human standpoint, as for instance: God repented, that he has done this or that and His wrath will be kindled against those Israelites who would worship idols.

Jehovah punished the whole Israelitic nation for the sins of some or even of one of them because all Israel is bound for the crimes and transgressions of every one among them. (Josh. vii, 11.) The ritualistic system was of mere local application and to be carried out by Israelites within their habitations. It was simply dependent upon their remaining in the promised land (Lev. xx, 25, 27, *ibid.* xxiii, 10, *ibid.* xxv, 2, etc., Deut. iv, 14 and 40; v, 28; vi, 1; viii, 1; xii, 1, etc.).

The whole Mosaic dispensation aimed at the conduct through which a good virtuous character and a happy civic life should be worked out, and therefore we find no mysterious doctrines in its system.

Everything that is taught therein is comprehensible and

tends to serve and promote the welfare of spirit and body. (Deut. xxx, 19, etc., and Lev. xviii, 5.)

Hence, there is never to be found in the whole Pentateuch the expression: Believe! But there is always an appeal to reason, conscience and historical facts. (Deut. iv, 39; vii, 9.)

The doctrine of monotheism, that is: that Jehovah is the most high Being worshipped by Israel, is taught as a finality, all other doctrines, principles, rules and regulations of worship are left to progressive development of the true devotees of the Mosaic dispensation. For that purpose the assurance is given (Deut. xviii, 18.): "I will raise up prophets from among their brethren like unto thee and will put my word into their mouths and they shall speak unto them all that I shall command them." Should any one object, that in the quoted passage it reads "Nabi" "a prophet" in the singular and not "Nebiim" "prophets" in the plural number, I must remark that the word "Nabi" is a collective noun, and does not mean one or any particular prophet.

For every impartial reader of the Pentateuch will admit that the entire text of the chapter, where this passage occurs, refers to a prophetic institution which shall be established among the Mosaic followers. Moses himself did not foreclose the truth against the development of human nature, but foretold a perpetual revelation leaving man to prove it in religious truth, reason, heart and soul.

He did not chain the intellectual faculties of men; but allowed them to advance. It may not be improper to notice here an objection which some might possibly make

against this statement. Did not Moses insist upon a vigorous ritual? Did not he lay down the principle: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." (Deut. iv, 2.) Or: "What thing soever I command you observe to do it. Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from." (*Ibid.* xiii, 1.)

Let us, however, not be deceived by a single sentence which is detached from its connection; but inquire into its right meaning.

Moses, exhorting and warning the Israelites, that they shall not adopt or imitate any form of divine worship of the heathen nations on account of their horrid practices and inhuman customs, gives them at the same time to understand that as monotheism is the central element of his religious system, it shall therefore remain forever unchangeable.

Nothing shall be added to this idea nor shall it be modified.

But all other religious principles, ideas, views, rules, and regulations may be improved, changed, altered or abolished. (Sanhedrin 90a; Baba Kama 8; Sota 47; II Kings iii, 19.)

That this verse was understood by all the prophets, scribes and ancient sages of Israel in the sense as indicated I shall attempt to prove later on by historical facts.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

Having given a sketch of the Mosaic system I will now endeavor to describe its development by the prophets.

With the founding by Samuel of the institute of the prophets a new era began.

Natural philosophy, arts and sciences, poetry and music, law and politics, in fine, all that could educate men's minds and ennoble their hearts, all that could serve to develop the growth of humanity and would lead the soul to absolute love of God and absolute truth, were taught in that school.

The material for a concise and full history concerning this school is unfortunately too meagre to draw from it sufficient information about its design and spirit.

But, nevertheless, there are enough historical records which show that the pupils of this school proved themselves during many centuries and until the Babylonian exile as potent factors exercising a highly beneficent influence upon the national character. They were known to the people by the name seers or prophets and were the real expounders of the Mosaic law which they improved in the name of God according to the spirit and the necessities of the times.

Samuel, who was considered to be a second Moses, as is obvious from Psalm xcix, 6, Jer. xv, 1, and Treatise Taanith, 5, forcefully inveighed against sacrifices and burnt offerings by laying down the principle: "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of a ram." (Sam. xv, 22.) This advanced idea is reëchoed in the songs of the Psalmists and in the earnest and fiery exhortations of many prophets. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, says the Psalmist, in Psalm xl, 7, "mine ears, hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." Or as it reads Psalm l, 8-14, "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices," etc. "Will I eat the flesh of bulls,

or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High."

"The true service of God," says Isaiah, "consists not in ceremonials," in types and symbols, but in the highest regions of religious life. "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them," etc. "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow," etc. (Isa. i, 13-18). Or as the prophet Micah said: "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil?" etc. "He has showed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah vi, 7 and 8).

Again said Isaiah: "Is not this the fast, that I have chosen? To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and ye break every yoke?" etc. (Isaiah lviii, 6 and 7).

The idea of divine retribution, that is, that God would visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, and the law which is based upon this principle to put to death all inhabitants, men, women and children of a city that have been enticed by some persons, to worship idols (Deut. xiii, 6, 16) which were entertained in the Mosaic writings, found no favor in the more spiritual prophetic school.

Jeremiah (xxxi, 27-34) explicitly says that all this was a preventive means for many barbarous and uncultivated ages, but there will come such an enlightened time when the dictates of reason will be established.

They will say no more, he continues: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth shall be set on edge. But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge."

The prophet Ezekiel, however, contradicted the Mosaic law and principle altogether in unequivocal terms.

He says in Chapter xviii, 20, "The soul that sinneth shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked be upon him."

The prophet Isaiah rejected the Mosaic idea of making the noble pedigree of the Israelites as an essential merit of them. He declares explicitly, that Israel must not look to the past, boasting, that the pious Abraham was their father; but they must look to the infinite love and mercy of the Eternal.

Thus, says Isaiah (lviii, 7-19), "I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord," etc., "and the great goodness toward the house of Israel," etc. "Doubtless Thou art our father, although Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not; Thou O Lord art our father, our redeemer, Thy name is from everlasting."

The correctness of my statement is also corroborated by the most ancient commentary on the Bible.

The Talmud remarks, Treatise Makkoth, 24: "Four ordinances were given by Moses which were then abrogated by four prophets," etc.

Again, it obtains in Sabbath, 55: "The piety and merits

of our ancestors Abraham, Issac and Jacob ceased to have any influence upon our fate long ago."

PURE MONOTHEISM

Another characteristic feature of the prophetical system is that One God Alone is recognized and the idea of inferior gods as guardians of the gentiles is not tolerated.

Isaiah teaches xlv, 6 and 8, "thus says the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last and besides me there is no God. I know not any." Or (xlv, 22 and 23), "Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

The Mosaic godhead, Jehovah, shall consequently be acknowledged and worshipped by the whole human race.

Yes, Isaiah did emphatically declare, that Israel is not privileged by divine Providence to be and to remain forever the sole worshippers of Jehovah upon the earth and to be thus exalted above all other nations; but he is destined (see Is. xlv, 1) to proclaim his praise (*ibid.* xliii, 21) and to labor to bring humanity to a higher spiritual standard.

Israel is not chosen to be the proud master and ruler, but the humble and faithful teacher of all nations.

Moved by the heavenly fire of inspiration the prophet Isaiah exclaimed in the name of God: "I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, I held thine hand and kept thee, in order to be the founder of the covenant of the people, a light of the gentiles. To open the eyes of the

blind, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house," etc. (Isa. xlii. 6 and 7), or *ibid.* xix, 21: "And the Lord shall be known to Egypt," etc., and *ibid.* 25: "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the works of my hands," etc. Or *ibid.* lxvi, 21: "And I will also take of them for priests and Levites says the Lord." Furthermore, says Zechariah (xiv, 9): "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be One Lord and His name One." Even so some of the Psalmists, the organs of the national literature, gave expression to the prophetic cosmopolitan ideas and to the sweet hope of a universal religion. "All the ends of the world shall remember and return unto Jehovah and all families of the Gentiles shall worship before Thee. For the Kingdom is the Lord's and He is Governor among all nations" (Ps. xxii, 28 and 29). Again: "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Ps. cxlv. 9). "Therefore not only in Palestine and Jerusalem shall be the sanctuary of the Lord, but everywhere." As the prophet Malachi said: "Behold from sun rising to sun setting my name shall be great among the nations; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering for my name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. i, 11). When, in consequence of the Babylonian captivity, the schools of the prophets were broken up and no one appeared who was willing and able to effect the spiritual and moral development of the Jewish people, the learned and talented priest Ezra went to Palestine, in the seventh year of Artachshast Darius Hystaspis, to accomplish the work of reforming

the religious affairs of his brethren in faith. He called the most talented and learned men (see Neh. viii, 13), according to tradition, to the number of one hundred and twenty to his aid, and endeavored, together with them, at the *synagoga magna*, the great assembly (*Anshe Keneseth Hagdolah*), to accommodate the Mosaic law to local circumstances and the new changed religious views of the people, and founded synagogues and religious schools in which the Scriptures were read and their contents explained to the people, in order that morality, virtue and justice, these principal pillars of human society, might be diffused and promoted.

The men educated in these schools were called Sophrim, Scribes, after the name of their founder Ezra, the Scribe.

The synagogue was then soon converted into an academy of theology, philosophy and politics, where doctrines were taught in which original personal views were mixed up with Indian, Egyptian and, later, also Grecian elements and ideas; and this combination was applied to the development, interpretation, extension and authentication of biblical doctrines.

They held scientific truth to be the master element in man and laid down the principle (Yerushalmi Berachoth, Chap. 1 and Baba Batra, 12): "The words of the Scribes are preferable to the words of the Law, and the words of the teaching elders to that of the Prophets." Thus they opened the port of the ocean of thought for all, and induced every reflective mind to go forth in all longitude and latitude to investigate, to think, to reason and to pass on the heavenly march.

Passing over *sub silentio* the three Jewish religious sects called *Esean*, *Sadducean* and *Baithosian*, since they have been extinct for many centuries, I will endeavor to represent the system of the Scribes or Pharisees or Talmudists which may be properly called Old Judaism and which is now in a state of transition into New Judaism.

They entertained the following opinions and principles: God is an infinite, unchangeable, unique, spiritual, eternal necessary providential Being which cannot be conceived by human understanding.

He does not exist in the world, but the whole universe exists in Him, wherefore God is called also "infinite space," *Makom*. He can be perceived only through His works. As regards the creation, they teach that out of many systems of worlds which were present to His wisdom, He created the best possible one and instituted the best order, Optimism. Hence, the principle laid down by Rabbi Akiba, whatever God does is well done (*Berachoth*, 60).

There is no fatalism on earth but all that happens is so ordained by God (*Chullin*, 7 b; *Matt.* x, 29-32) except virtue and piety which are entirely left to man's free choice (*Berachoth*, 15).

In reference to that it is taught: Everything that is done is seen by Providence although freedom of choice is left to man concerning his moral action.

God judges the world for its own well being, and the judgment depends on the balance of deeds (*Pirke Abot*, iii, 8, 15).

And although good and evil is entirely left in this sub-lunary world to man's choice, they maintain that he who

pursues or endeavors to pursue the paths of virtue receives the support of God; whereas the designs of him who chooses the way of wickedness are not fixed from above, but entirely the fruits of his own choice (Yoma, 38). These principles are based upon Ps. xxxvii, 23, and Prov. xx, 23.

The soul is a spiritual (Midrash Rabba Gen. xii and Lev. iv), unique, simple, everlasting (*ibid.* Gen. xiv and Lev. iv), self-acting entity (*ibid.* Lev. iv) which is called to perfect itself in this world, the ante-chamber of that to come (Pirke Abot, iv, 21), that it may be admitted into the palace, the realm of the saints, where it will immediately partake of God's majesty; that is to say, where it will increase in moral and in intellectual power in such an extraordinary degree as to fill it with inconceivable delight surpassing all pleasure and joy that this earth can afford (*ibid.* iv, 22).

The immortality of the soul and reward and punishment in a world to come were generally known to the Jews long before the Christian Era as is clearly perceptible from the history of the martyrs contained in Chap. vii, 9 and 30, of the II Book of the Maccabees and Chap. i, 15, iv 10, 14-17, v, 15 and 16, and iii, 1-5 of the Book of Wisdom.

Concerning eternal punishment of the soul the Pharisees differ with the prophet Isaiah (lxvi, 24) and limited it only to a few crimes.

For most of the sins and transgressions, however, Israelites and Non-Israelites will be punished only one year (Rosh Hashanah, 17), and according to others but seven weeks (Erubin, 19a).

They believed in the doctrine of a separate creation of

the soul, hence maintain its preexistence (Midrash Rabba, 24).

Concerning the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven or that of the Messiah, there have been different opinions prevailing among the Scribes. Some say: "Israel has no Messiah" (Sanhedrin, 98) which means, according to authoritative interpreters, that the Israelites should not expect in the Messiah a visible ruler, or a man commissioned to make the world happy; but the complete supremacy of godliness upon earth.

Some assert (Berachoth, 34, and Pesachim, 68): "There is no other difference between the time of Messiah and this world than this, that political oppression will cease to exist."

Some, and these are only individual opinions, believed in the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and made it even an article of faith.

The resurrection of the dead and the future world they considered identical (Baba Kama, 54; Chullin, 142; Kidushin, 39).

Like Plato, they teach that virtue consists in imitating God; as an ancient work, the "Mechilta," observes: "We must strive to become like God, as God is gracious and merciful, so be thou gracious and merciful." Or as Moses teaches (Lev. xix, 2): "Ye shall be holy; for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

This injunction is furthermore held forth as the highest principle of all virtue and piety. In former times, thus it is related in Makkoth, 24: "They enumerated six hundred

and thirteen laws, affirmative and prohibitory which had been delivered to Moses on the mount of Sinai." But David taught (Ps. xv) that these Mosaic laws could be comprised in eleven principles, namely: to walk uprightly; to work righteousness; to speak the truth; to abstain from slander; to abstain from doing evil unto one's neighbor; not to bring any reproach upon one's fellowman; to condemn vile persons; to honor the Godfearing; to swear to one's own injury and keep the oath; to lend out money without usury (to which the Rabbis add: and even to heathens); and to protect the innocent disinterestedly.

The prophet Micah again reduced them to three, to wit: to exercise justice, to be benevolent towards everyone, and to humbly walk before God (Micah vi, 8).

Isaiah, in his turn, reduced them to two principles (Is. lvi, 1), justice and benevolence; and Habakkuk lastly established one highest principle: "The righteous liveth in his belief," meaning that God desires the holiness of our sentiments and actions. This holiness, however, we can reach when we elevate ourselves above all that attracts our senses and obey the dictates of reason alone as it is expressed in these few words: "Let all thy actions be directed to what is divine, sublime" (Pirke Abot, ii, 17).

Yet in a manner as admits not of the principle: "The aim sanctifies the means" (Midrash Rabba Lev. xxx and Succah, in several places).

They, like Aristotle, regard the virtue of righteousness "Dikaosyne," "Zedakah," since it consists in the observance of all divine and civil laws as the complex of all

virtue. This virtue of righteousness, they say, balances all virtues (Baba Batra, 9a).

They, furthermore, teach like Socrates (Xenophon's Mem. iii, 9, par. 5) that wisdom consists in practical knowledge. Thus it reads (Berachoth, 17): The aim of wisdom is improvement and the achievement of good deeds. The law, they say, begins and ends in doing good (Sotah, 13b).

The categorical imperative is thus expressed by Rabbi Hillel (one hundred years before the Christian Era): "Do not unto others as thou wishest not to be done" (Sabbath, 31a).

As an enlargement upon this highest principle, the same sage teaches: "Judge not thy neighbor until thou be in his situation" (Pirke Abot, ii, 5).

Hillel did not endeavor to maintain everything in the Jewish religion in *statu quo* but tried earnestly and zealously to evoke an unceasing activity in the field of religion.

This intention was not to make the law more onerous, and to interpret it at pleasure, but he always strove earnestly to harmonize it with the circumstances of time and place.

That he did it, however, without any religious scruples, arose from the fact that this had already been done likewise in many instances by the Prophets.

In this manner it was that the ceremony of circumcision was dispensed with under Moses, while the Israelites were sojourning in the wilderness, and the Day of Atonement under Solomon.

The prophet Elijah, who was not a descendant of Aaron, sacrificed on an unholy place. The prophet Elisha ordered

the Israelites not only to destroy the cities but to fell also all the fruit trees in the land of Moab (See II Kings iii, 19) although such a kind of hostility in warfare is expressly forbidden in the Mosaic law (Deut. xx, 19).

Furthermore, Ezra altered a biblical law in order to punish the Levites; because they did not accompany him, when he went up with the exiles from Babylon to settle Jerusalem.

He ordered the first tithes to be given to the priests and not to Levites, as the Bible commands (Yebamath, 86).

Hillel suspended an express biblical Law, when he was convinced that it had become impracticable and might prove detrimental to the general welfare (Shebiit, Chap. x, 3 and 4, and Gittin, Chap. iv, 3).

Since Hillel considered all religious laws as instrumental to the advancement of the temporal and spiritual welfare of men, he handed down seven hermeneutic exegetical rules (Abot de-Rabbi Natan, Chap. 37, and Siphra, at the beginning) by which the oral and written law should be interpreted according to the wants of the time.

The noble and praiseworthy intention of Hillel was, however, not quite understood by his own disciples, nor by those of his hasty-tempered antagonist Shammai.

They used the traditional rules of exegesis to accumulate laws upon laws, so that every breath of a Jewish life was besieged by rabbinical requirements, and the small Mosaic volume was drowned in the ocean of "Mishnahs" (teachings, rules and regulations).

The academies of the Pharisees degenerated into propagators of sophistical subtleties and braggart mock eruditi

or, because everyone was admitted even without being first examined as to his abilities, and indispensable preparatory accomplishments, and thus way was made for false learning and education (Sotah, 22b; Sanhedrin, 98b).

This course of action soon became known to the intelligent teachers.

Although they perceived the danger that threatened to disturb the moral purity of the people and gradually to deaden the awakened speculative spirit, they knew of no other method nor did they have any means, whereby to avert the danger, than urgent admonitions to shun these seducing teachers, and to portray a distinct characteristic of the true scholar and sage, whose highest aim of life consists in attaining to the most sublime traits of moral and spiritual perfection.

But when the little country of Judea, which became many decenniums before the Christian Era a tributary to the Romans, was finally crushed to death by the warlike Roman giant, and the Jews were dispersed in all parts of the great Roman empire, in those gloomy days of exile, intolerance and most horrible persecutions and sufferings which the Jews had to endure, and of the seclusion to which they were consigned, as a matter of course, their spiritual development and progress came to a standstill. Fanaticism which declared them as fugitives and outcasts and robbed them of their inalienable rights for no other crime than that of their faithful attachment and adherence to the doctrine of their ancestors, drove them to retirement in their synagogues, where their spirits had been imprisoned

between the four walls and chained to old books inherited by their fathers.

Alas! the radiance of many brilliant jewels which would have adorned the crown of humanity became thus extinguished in the darkness of the Jewish Ghettos.

Despite all these seeming insuperable obstacles in the path of the Jews, it appears that in every country where they settled some of them rose to high eminence in literature, and in the arts and sciences, even though the chief study of the mass of the Jewish people was exclusively the Bible and Talmud, and this was usually pursued in a very unscientific manner.

When in 1776 the saviour of humanity, civil and religious liberty, was born in our blessed and happy Union, he was surrounded with a halo, that illumined Europe to such a degree that thousands, yes millions, became earnestly determined to abolish all barbarous mediaeval institutions, in order that all may enjoy equally the atmosphere of freedom.

Many noted Christian authors, statesmen, and scholars advocated with great eloquence the acknowledgment of the inalienable rights of men, and about five hundred books and pamphlets were published demanding the emancipation of the Jews. The enlightened nations of Europe not only discarded the system of persecution against the Jew, but granted them all civil rights and declared them equal to their Christian fellow citizens in every respect.

Thus the drooping shoots of the sturdy and indestructible tree of Jewish Faith, which had for centuries successfully defied and withstood the most violent tempests of fanati-

cism and persecution aimed to undermine and supplant it, became revived by the heavenly dew of reason and re-invigorated, and the Jewish congregations finding themselves disenthralled from the yoke of oppression shook off their lethargy into which they had sunk during the dark ages.

Development and progress became the watchwords heard in the camps of Israel everywhere.

Having arrived at the stage of emancipated manhood, the result was that a great number of highly learned Israelites appeared in the arena of literature and especially of theology and philosophy, who endeavored with an intense fervor and zeal to get at the essence of Judaism and to bring it in unison with the demands of the spirit of the times.

Historical researches were made which served for an elucidation of the province of Judaism.

Many prejudices were banished, and many errors corrected. The modern Rabbis directed their special attention to all the sources of the Jewish religion, in order to learn how it developed itself through many phases, and thus to know how to improve it in our time and to give it a universal historical importance.

A spiritual warfare is going on among the Jewish representatives of different religious platforms, which are prevalent among the Jews in both hemispheres.

With lightning speed the press sends forth a great many books, pamphlets, essays and journals which spread the seeds of a higher religious knowledge and enlightenment among the Jewish congregations.

The Rabbinical conferences and synods which take place from time to time in Europe as well as in this country still heighten and influence the general spiritual activity of the Jewish congregation. The first Rabbinical conference took place in Germany in the city of Braunschweig, June 12th, 1844, and in this country in Cleveland, Ohio, October 17th, 1855.

And although both had to suffer from protests hurled against them from the extremest quarters of Judaism, they are nevertheless continually held and become more and more the telegraphs of religious culture. From all the energetic movements, which have now been stated, it appears that the great subject is, generally, to establish a New Judaism.

I will endeavor to give you a synopsis of its ideas, views and main principles as they are expressed in innumerable books, pamphlets and essays dealing with the subject and which may be considered as the germ or the second Decalogue of New Judaism.

They are as follows:

I. We believe in an eternal, indivisible and immutable Unity of God who is the primitive source of all, the Father of all mankind, hearing the prayers of all His children without any mediator.

II. Man is gifted with an immortal soul to be good and to do good, to love men and God and thus to be contented in the present state of life as well as in the next world.

III. The Mosaic religion is capable of infinite progress.

IV. The spirit of the Sacred Scripture must be conceived and all and everything that proves itself as tem-

porary and local must be discarded from Judaism. Having acquired a perfect knowledge of the subject, a free inquiry and interpretation may be exercised and the Scriptural text expounded by the common rules of grammar, logic and rhetoric.

V. The collection of controversies, discourses and treatises, ordinances, rules and regulations, called the Talmud, is only a source of religious history but is no authority whatever for practical Judaism.

VI. All external practices which are not suitable to any salutary influence upon the mind, or are in contradiction to the moral consciousness of the present, are to be cast off.

VII. Traditional ceremonies and observances, biblical or non-biblical, are to be altered as soon as their form offend the moral and esthetic feeling of modern civilization.

VIII. All effective expedients of establishing a true worship of God, whether of old or modern origin, are to be adhered to.

IX. A Messiah who shall lead back the Israelites to Palestine is neither expected nor wished for. The true Israelite considers the country where he was born or where he gained citizenship his Palestine.

X. The idea of a Messianic Destiny of Israel is to be retained: Israel's holy mission is to become the redeeming Messiah of all mankind, teaching and preaching the truth.

Having thus exhibited the system of Judaism of modern times, I hope that every unbiased mind will admit that Modern Judaism is not a child of the ancient ritualistic system of types and symbols; but has outgrown its child-

hood and stands in the full bloom of manhood, striving with all its might to bring its system to such a perfection that it may be acknowledged by every reflective mind to be a good foundation of a universal religion.

THE BIBLICAL IDEA OF GOD *

In a time like ours where the intellect of the American Israelites does not put an inconsiderable weight into the scales of the culture of the whole Judaism, and we can boast of eminent theologians, historians, philosophers, philologists, critics, orators, journalists, novelists, etc., even as well as our brethren in faith in Europe, I do not doubt a moment that a purely scientific article would with even such, nay, with much greater interest be read, as all the imitated or imported superficial theories, wavering hither and thither in a deluge of mere words and phrases.

It is true, that there are in Germany some illiberal and arrogant would-be dictators of the whole Jewish press, and of all intellectual efforts of the Jews, who ignore or misrepresent our most laudable endeavors in Jewish enterprises, and like to be our guardians in every respect.

But this should not weaken our conviction that there are among us learned and highly talented men standing not behind the times, and that they, if they would only find the necessary encouragement and support, could produce many praiseworthy works in the realm of learning.

It is this fact especially which induced me to publish the following article of purely scientific content, in order to awaken the slumbering powers for similar endeavors. And now to the subject.

* Reprinted from the "Israelite," iii, Nos. 26, 29, 33, 36, 39.

The idea of a deity is the foundation of all religion; for this alone is the commencement and the seal of all religious ideas. It is the head-spring from which all the ideas about the relations of God, to the world and men, are flowing.

But, keeping aloof from dreaming also all the idle dreams which the Kabbalists, mystics, fanatics and theosophists had about this subject many centuries, I will rather endeavor to give a clear historical explanation and representation of the fundamental ideas of the Mosaic law, collecting here all the old biblical passages directly concerning it.

The names which are given to God in the old biblical Scripture are:

1. **אלהים** Elohim. This word designates the creator and judge of the whole universe. It is always used in the Pluralis, as *pluralis eminatiæ*, in singular meaning, and is, therefore, in the most part construed with the verb in singular. The literal sense of it is primitive power, omnipotence, and main cause of all natural forces. (See Gen. 4 and 5, Ps. lxxv, 8. Jonah iii, 7-10.)

The idols of the heathen nations are, therefore, also called **אלהים** (Elohim); because they worshipped in the most part, the natural forces which they have represented by arbitrary signs.

This explains the apparently difficult passage in Ex. xii, 12, that God will execute judgments against all the gods of Egypt. It is confessedly meant to signify by this expression that God will show to the people that he alone is the ruler of natural forces, and that they have no influence whatever without his will and permission. Again, by this

can be understood the following passages: "Worship Him all ye gods! For Thou," the Psalmist continues *ibid.* v. 6, "art high above all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods." (Psalm, xcvi, 7.) Further (*ibid.* lxxxvi, 8 and 10.) "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord, neither can they perform any works like unto Thy works—For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things; Thou art God alone."

Although many theologians and philosophers make the objection that the Mosaic monotheism is a particularism, and that it teaches to regard God as a guardian and national God of Israel, every lover of truth needs only to read the above quoted passages, and he will be convinced that this reproach is a bitter unfounded accusation.

A God who is represented as the creator of the whole universe, who punishes human wickedness and the depravity of the whole mankind, and forgives the sins of the sincere penitents of every nation, and grants them then peace, bliss and happiness; a God, of whom is said: Ps. cxlv, 8, "He is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works," and who has spoken through the prophet Isaiah (xix, 25), saying: "Blessed be Egypt my people and Assyria the work of my hands and Israel mine inheritance," I should think can not be regarded as an Israelitish benefactor alone, but of the whole human race.

The expression **אלהי ישראל** means not the Israelitish God but the God who is acknowledged and worshiped by Israel. Mankind is the divine kingdom, and Israel is God's throne, his chosen place from which he will rule over all nations; as it reads Jer. iii, 17, "At that time they shall

call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it," etc.¹ Or as we read in I Ch. xxviii, 5, "He has chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of God over Israel." In my work entitled, "Guide for Rational Investigations," translated into English by Rev. Dr. M. Mayer, in Charleston, I speak on this subject at large.

2. ה' The investigation of the origin, pronunciation and true meaning of this divine name had much engaged Jews and Christians at all times, and especially the Kabbalists, gnostics and theosophists. I should, indeed, quote here a whole library, if I would make only short sketches of all that was dreamed about it. And in spite of all fables about the mystery of this holy name, no trace of it can be found in the whole Bible.

The pronunciation of this peculiar name of God שם המפורש was known to every ordinary man, and it appears clearly by the passage in Lev. xxiv, 11: "And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of God, and cursed."

The most distinguished ancient² commentators agree, that "Hashem" signifies the peculiar Hebrew name ה'.

¹ This metaphor was used by Moses, Exodus xvii, 15, as the Pesikta correctly understood it.

כי יד על כס יה מלחמה לה' בעמלק מדר (פסיקתא) פשטה ידו בכסאו של הקב"ה וכי בידר יש בו כח לפשוט וכו'

The Pesikta adds: Amalek has lifted his hand against the throne of God (that is Israel), therefore shall be war for God with Amalek from generation to generation.

² תרגום אונקלוס ופריש וכו' ית שמא וארגז. יונתן בן עוזיאל ופריש וחרף. רש"י שנקב שם המיוחד וגדף והוא שם המפורש. סנהדרין דף ו' ע' א נוב' ה, זו ברכת השם וכו' הוא אומר ונקב שם ה' וגו'. |

Had the pronunciation of the word 'ה' belonged to the mysteries of the Jewish religion, it would not have been known to a man, whose father was an Egyptian. Ay, it would have been mentioned with especial stress, that it should be kept secret.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 56 b) and *ibid.* 60 maintain³ that 'ה' was known even to the Heathen nations, and⁴ the Midrash Rabba (Gen. iv. 1), said that it was known to mankind from its first existence.

The ancient and modern commentators assert, indeed, that wherever the expression 'ה' occurs in Genesis the historian himself is the author of it, but in significant passages he makes constant use of the original אל שדי (El Shadai).

This assertion I must, however, reject by the following arguments:

1. It is given in Gen. iv, 26, as a historical fact, that the general adoration, or according to others, the blasphemy of the holy name 'ה' commenced at the time of Enosh.

2. This name is explicitly mentioned in a very important passage, Gen. xv, 7.

Now, if any one should object that there is a passage in Ex. vi, 3, which shows very clearly that the patriarchs did not know the name of 'ה', as Philippson remarks, and a host of commentators said the same a thousand times before him, I must reply that all these expounders of the law,

³ סנהדרין דף ס' השומע אזכרה בזמן הזה וכו' אלא פשיטא מנכרי. ואי שם המיוחד מי גמירי (רש"י) מי גמירי כולי האי וכו'.

⁴ בראשית רבה פ' י"ז אמר רב אחא אני ה' הוא שם ישעיה מ"ב הוא שמי שמי שקרא לו האדם הראשון.

Philippson in Magdeburg not excepted, have founded their opinion on a false interpretation of the above quoted verse, and did not understand at all the meaning of it, as I will prove later.

Philippson translated Ex. vi, 3: "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name, Eternal, I was not known to them."

Exactly so Luther in his German version and the authors of the English common version translated this passage of the Bible, but it is incorrect for the following reasons:

1. The name of Mount Moriah in Jerusalem (Gen. xxii, 2) is a compound word of *מר יה* "chosen by God." (See Gesenius.) This opinion was also adopted by Philippson, (See his remarks on Gen. xxii, 14.) *Jah יה* is, however, an abbreviation of Jehovah; consequently the name of Jehovah must have been known to Abraham.

2. Gen. xxii, 14, reads: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahyireh, as it is said to this day, 'In the mount of Jehovah it shall be seen.' The remark added by the historian "as it is said to this day," proves ⁵ that Abraham was the author of the name Jehovah-yireh.

3. It follows from Gen. xxi, 33, which ideas Abraham had especially respecting the name Jehovah. It reads "——and he called there on the name Jehovah who is an everlasting God."

⁵ Mr. Philippson, busied with copying ideas of different authors, has probably forgotten when he was commenting on Exodus vi, 3, what he has adopted as certain, Genesis xxii, 14. Only sciolists and partial friends can recommend such a translation and such a commentary.

The only correct definition of the passage above quoted from Ex. vi, 3, is given by the commentator (Rashi), to which Rabbi Elijah Misrachi⁶ adduced good grammatical grounds. Rashi says, that the meaning of the verse is, "I was not known to the Patriarchs by 'my true essence which the name Jehovah signifies,' " i. e., Moses had such a perfect idea of the divine essence as none had before him, as I will discuss and prove hereafter. The verse above quoted must accordingly be rendered in this way; "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob, by the name of God the Almighty, and was even by the name Jehovah not perfectly known to them."

Furthermore it is historically evident that the people long before Moses did out of reverence towards God call their children by the name of Jehovah with a suitable epithet. Thus, for instance, was the mother of Moses called Jochebed. This word is obviously (see Gesenius) a compound of יהו and כבד which signifies: her honor is Jehu (God,) viz.: יוחנן יהויכין יוכין יהוחנן From this it follows that the name Jehovah was commonly known to the people before the time of Moses.

If now the archeologists, theologians and philosophers maintain, that Moses borrowed the name Jao from the mysteries of Egyptian priests, I must reject this opinion for the following reasons:

⁶ ספר מורחי כי מאמרו לא נודעתי מורה שעצמותו הוא הפעול ומאמרו ושמי ה' מורה שהפעול הוא שמו לפיכך הוצרך להוסיף ב' במלת שמו כאלו אמר ובשמי ה' לא נודעתי ובוזה הותרה גם קושיות הרי הדיעם שכר שמו וכו'.

1. From the above investigation it follows obviously, that the name of Jehovah was familiar with the people long before the birth of Moses.

2. It is not historically evident that an Egyptian godhead was called Jao. (See Jablonski, *Panth. Aeg.* I. p. 250.)

3. Admitted, that the hypothesis of having existed among the Egyptians some theological mysteries being true, there are more than plausible⁷ historical reasons that those priests who should have been in possession of them did not reflect much on religious subjects, and consequently the results of their reasoning about such matters could not have been of a great importance.

4. It is very likely that any secret theology has not existed in Egypt; for the priests would have otherwise expressly told it when they were questioned about various religious customs, especially as they liked always to be considered among the Greeks more enlightened than the Egyptian people, they would have referred undoubtedly to the fact that there are some mysterious explanations which are not permitted to be communicated to laymen.

5. Such a similarity of the name of the godhead, if any, is unimportant because, as I will show hereafter, there was never contained such a definition of the word Jehovah in the religious system of the Egyptians as Moses has given of it.

6. If Moses had borrowed the name Jao from the Egyptian mysteries, how could he make his appearance in Egypt,

⁷ See Meiner's religious history of the ancient nations, 256, &c. *Historiae doctrinae de vero Deo*, p. 23.

maintaining that he was ordered by the God Jao to his mission, without fear of being contradicted by the Egyptian priests of this god?

7. It is inconceivable that Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, said (Ex. v, 2): Who is Jao and I do not know Jao. Should not Pharaoh as a king have been initiated into the mysteries of the most enlightened men of the kingdom? And if so, had he not sought counsel about such an important event from all the wise men and scribes whom he had otherwise consulted about a mere vision in a dream? (See Gen. xli, 2.) ^s

Having proved, that the words *Elohim* and *Jehovah* (אלהים and יהוה) are both ancient names of the deity, and were alike used in times immemorial, it is evident that the system of the renowned theologian de Wette and by innumerable mutterers, that the Pentateuch was composed by two different authors of an original document where always the name *Elohim* occurs, and a latter one where the name *Jehovah* is prevailing—falls to the ground, and is nothing else than a phantom and a fine spun dream. The different use of these two divine names depends only on the meaning of each word in which it was understood.

1. I maintain that there were in Egypt no theological mysteries, of any particular importance from which Moses

^sThe Pharaoh of Joseph was an Egyptian; but the Pharaoh of Moses was of the Hyksos, in the time of Egyptian ignorance, who killed the priests, defiled the temples, and hated knowledge. The Hyksos Pharaoh worshipped Typhon, and hated both Jao and Jehovah.

could or would have derived any religious ideas, and especially of the Deity.

2. It seems to me to be historically evident, that the Pharaoh under the reign of whom the Israelites lived in bondage was not a Hyksos, and that the report of it by Manetho is merely an Egyptian dream.

The testimony of Josephus is very questionable; for what evidence has Josephus for his account? Professor Saalschutz and a great many renowned historians have proved beyond doubt, that we have to make a very limited use of Josephus' record of past ages on account of having written his work without submitting the sources (if any) from which he has drawn to a critical test, and, as to our subject, the history of antiquity contradicts him directly.

In order, however, not to become tedious by quoting here all the opinions of a host of philosophers, I will only adduce those of Emanuel Berger.

He says in his history of philosophy, page 61 (Ed. Berlin) in regard to ancient Egypt:

"A secret theology might have been either in connection with the popular religion, or it might have contained the abstract idea which laid the foundation of the latter, as we have illustrated before. It must have been the cause by means of which the popular religion took such a curious form.

"But from all these suppositions can not be found any trace in the many explanations of religious customs given by the Egyptian priests, etc. When they were questioned about the meaning of their religious customs, they dispatched Herodotus with myths and curious illustrations, Plato with philosophical sentences, and Diodor with stories, and have not mentioned with one syllable, that there are some religious mysteries. We have no historical ground whatever for supposing there has existed any secret theology among the Egyptian priests," etc.

Saalschutz (on the Critique of Manetho, p. 8, Koenigsberg, 1851,) says:

"Suppose Manetho has found some interesting accounts in the Egyptian temples, they were at all events of a later date than those of Herodotus and Diodor, and are of a problematical authenticity." In another place (*ibid.*): "If now Champollion, Rosellini, Ideler, Lepsius and Bunsen endeavored to trace out completely, in the hieroglyphic writings, the series of kings reported by Manetho, it follows from this fact, that Manetho has made use of the inscriptions of the monuments, but does not prove at all that he has not annexed to them fabulous legends and poetry, as historical facts," etc.

What the renowned Herder said in other respects can be justly applied to this matter. "If there is a province of literature which is a mire, and where a host of learned men with all property sunk deep into the mud, it is here."

Hoffmann proves, (Studies and Critique, 1839, p. 393.) "that not any Arabic people were called Hyksos, and has never oppressed the Israelites and Egypt, and the reports of Manetho are compositions formed of the records of the Israelites."

Hengstenberg proves the spuriousness and lying disposition of Manetho's accounts, and that the received historical matter was changed on account of Egyptian national pride.

Ewald states in his "History of the Israelitish Nation," vol. i, p. 450, with whom Von Lengerke agreed in the main points in the work "Kanaan," page 360, that not the Hyksos but the kings of Egypt oppressed the children of Israel.

My arguments displayed previously are consequently in agreement with the newest historical researches.

In conclusion, I have to add, that the difficulties which many learned men thought to find in Exodus i; and which gave rise to old and new hypotheses and notions, can be

avoided when entering into a true spirit of the Hebrew language.

Thus for instance the question was raised, How is it possible that a mere change of dynasties should have wholly estranged the meritorious Joseph? This question would be correct, if the expression **לֹא יָדַע אֶת יוֹסֵף** can only be rendered, "who did not know Joseph?" But the most ancient commentator Onkelos translates by **דְּלֹא מְקִיִּים מִרְתּוֹ יוֹסֵף** "who did not observe the decrees of Joseph," that is to say, who was displeased with the political system of Joseph. It seems to me, that Onkelos understood **יָדַע** signifies here be favorable, propitious to any one, as it is used in the same sense, Gen. xviii, 19, and, therefore, is the paraphrase of Onkelos not an arbitrary one; but is a true comprehension of the verb **יָדַע**. According to that a literal translation would be: "And there arose a new king over Egypt who was not favorable to Joseph."

Again they ask, Ex. i, 9 reads, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we, how is it conceivable that the Hebrews should have been at that time more numerous than the Egyptians, and should have surpassed them by strength?"

But, if we would render the quoted verse as Mendelssohn did, then all these questions are not applicable. He renders "Behold, the people of Israel have become too much and too mighty for us."

After **הֵנָּה** must be supplied very often the verb **הָיָה**, for instance Gen. 37, **וְהֵנָּה חָלוּם** should be **וְהָיָה חָלוּם**.

Mendelssohn has probably supplied **וַיְהִי** and translated as it would be **הֵנָּה עַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵהְיֶה רַב וְגו'**. The entire con-

tents show that this is correct, because only in this way can be understood the expression in the next verse, 'פן ירבה וגו'.

The Israelites were not, of course, more numerous and mightier than the Egyptians; but Pharaoh considered it highly necessary to take energetic steps, that they should not become very numerous. For, he said, it may happen in any war, and they will join our enemies, and either help to war against us, or leave our land.

Having proved by arguments founded on history, that the name Jehovah was neither borrowed from the Egyptians nor was adopted by a later author in the records of a former age, but that this divine name was already known by the patriarchs of the Israelites before the birth of Moses; ay, according to the biblical report, even to many oriental heathen nations—I will endeavor to show now the meaning which the heathens applied to this expression, how it was improved by Abraham, and how the patriarchal opinions became perfected by Moses in the highest degree.

From Gen. xiv, 19, it follows irrefutably that a most high, powerful and providential being was worshiped in the city of Salem; but the most ancient reports of the Phœnician religious observances prove that the ideas of God by Abraham were only different from those of Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High in Salem. Under the expression *Elion* (the Most High) they certainly understood one supreme being; but considered it acting in an arbitrary manner to require a sacrifice of man's dearest possession, such as one's only child, to gain the divinity's favor.

They hold therefore, that the human sacrifice was the perfection of all pious exercises.

Against these errors of the human mind Abraham rose with the greatest energy. He taught that the will of the *Elion* or Most High is the type of the highest morality, and that we gain God's favor merely by an absolute obedience to the moral laws. (See Gen. xviii, 19.)

Every one who obtains in this way the grace of Jehovah can rely upon him confidently, because he is then his true ally and protector. (See Gen. xv, 18; xvii, 4-9; xxiv, 3; xxii, 1-19.) He understood under the name of Jehovah, eternal justice. (See Gen. xviii, 25 and xxi, 33.)

These passages may also be regarded as containing the foundation of his religious ideas and the principles of his faith.

In conformity with this, Abraham endeavored to improve the external worship generally established, and considered it an internal moral matter of the heart and mind.

We therefore never find in the records of the patriarchs, that they offered a sacrifice to the Deity upon an altar if they were in distress or danger; but they poured out these feelings in fiery prayers before God or made a vow that their most zealous efforts in life should be to perform moral deeds.

Thus we read Gen. xii, 17, "And there builded he an altar unto the Lord." From this and similar passages it follows confessedly that the Patriarchs, as I have stated above, built only an altar as a place of worship, and not to burn upon it killed animals as sacrifices.

The history of the trial of Abraham by God to sacrifice

his son Isaac must be regarded as a demonstration of our Patriarch against the vicious and horrible custom of human sacrifice.

As we read, that the prophets have very often taught or exhorted the corrupted age by visible examples, just so did Abraham.

His practice was to protest publicly against the opinion that the highest perfection of morality consists in killing animals or men for God's sake; but in promoting a happy state of human society.

This idea was afterwards literally expressed in Lev. xviii, 5, "Ye shall, therefore, keep my statutes and my judgments, which, if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord," or as Micah explicitly says, vi, 7 and 8. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God?"

It was maintained in modern times, indeed, that Abraham has borrowed his principal ideas of monotheism from the Chaldeans among whom he lived; but although it is true that the Chaldeans were not a mere class of the people constituting priests, learned men and astrologers, but a people possessing a certain degree of culture, as Cicero already remarked, "*De divinatione*, I. I." *Chaldei, non ex artis sed ex gentis vocablo nominati*, so much it follows from the reports of their religious system which we possess by Herodotus, Cestius, Diodorus of Sicily, Arrian and Strabo,

that the Chaldeans did not believe in only One providential being, but paid homage to pantheism.

They took it for a certainty that the world is everlasting, and the order and regular motions of the planets originate with the resolution of the Gods who are the stars themselves. (See Diodor, II, 143.) This fallacious conclusion of the Chaldeans, that the bodies in whom a regular motion is coherent, must be rational and free, was rejected by Abraham, who endeavored with the greatest zeal to make the ideas of God more perfect among his contemporaries as I have stated above. The patriarchal system on the idea of the deity is clearly expounded by the author of the book of Job, which represents to the reader the time of the patriarchs.⁹

The disputing friends agree that the Supreme Being is an absolute power and the Creator, and that he decrees the destinies of man. They differ only in opinion in regard to the principles by which God governs the world, whether they are moral or arbitrary. The debate is then concluded, that God acts always in conformity with the highest morality, and which cannot be fathomed by any man.

This system on the idea of God by the patriarchs was improved in the highest degree by Moses.

He expounded it with such clearness, correctness and perfection that the greatest philosophers from the remotest antiquity until the modern times did and could not say anything better on this subject, as I will prove later.

⁹ See Eichhorn's Introduction V §b, 14 S. 104, and De Wette's historical critical introduction, p. 362.

In order to ascertain the real meaning of the divine name Jehovah, according to the Pentateuch as well as to the prophetical Scripture I will here place together all the passages in relation to it, and expound them distinctly.

In Ex. iii, 14, the name Jehovah is rendered, **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה**, "I will be that I will be."

All commentators agree that this passage signifies the idea of divine eternity, but they differ only as to how the double expression *Ehjah* [I will be] should be explained.

It seems, indeed, that **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** [that I will be,] without resorting to an artificial explanation, is superfluous. For else why are these words omitted in the next part of the same verse? Considering, however, that the most important idea of all thoughts should be defined here, how is it possible that it has been done in such an incorrect manner?

To avoid this difficulty, I will now endeavor to illustrate the quoted passage in another way.

The first word "*Ehjah*" (**אֶהְיֶה**) conveys the idea of being as it was expounded by Isaiah, xlviii, 13, **אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן**, "I am, I am the first and I am the last," that is, I am, I was, and I will be. But a mere being or existing is as good as nothing to us, as long as it can not be perceived in any way. The two words **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** are, therefore, added to explain the first word **אֶהְיֶה**, telling us that it is an everlasting being who reveals itself as existing. The passage must be rendered thus: I will be, who will become a perceptible existence, i.e.: who will always be known by its operations. The two words **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** which

were only given as an illustration, are, therefore, very justly omitted in the other part of the verse.

The correctness of this conception is proved by the concluding words of the passage, [Ex. iii, 15,] where it reads: *זה שמי לעולם חה וזכרי לדר דר*, "This [the immutable Being denoted by the name Jehovah,] is my essence¹⁰ in all my eternity, and this will be my memorial, [namely by its visible and perceptible operations] from generation to generation.

In the same sense we read explicitly, *ibid.* xv, 18, "Jehovah will reign for ever and ever."

And thus it is clearly expressed *ibid.* xxxiv, 6 and 7: "Jehovah appears as a being, almighty, gracious and benign, long-suffering and abundant in mercy and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." It is, indeed, generally supposed, that Moses has drawn his idea of God from Egyptian theological sources. This opinion, they maintain, can be proved by an inscription of Neith (Egyptian Athena) at Sais in Lower Egypt.

Plutarch reports: "At Sais, the temple of Athena, whom they consider always as Isis, has the following inscription: "I am all that was, that is, and that will be, and no mortal has ever lifted my veil."

This inscription, however, is of a modern and not of an ancient Egyptian origin at all, as it can be proved by the diction of it. The ancient Egyptians did not know any such thing as the *Peblos* (Greek veil) which was transferred

¹⁰ I translate *שם* "essence" as the same expression must be rendered in Ex. vi, 3, and in other places as I believe I have satisfactorily proven.

from the Greek goddess of Athens to Sais in this inscription. (See Konrad Schwenk's "Mythology of the Egyptians," p. 166.) Although, Schwenk justly remarks, *ibid.*, that Proklus styled this inscription in Plato's *Timaeus* as follows: "I am that is, that will become to be, and that came in existence. Nobody has ever unveiled my Chiton (under-garment,) and the fruit which I have borne was Helios (the sun)." But the Athenian *Peblos* having been done away by him, the inscription assumes no better prospect. For, by removing, the veil not being recognisable, it is ridiculous and absurd also to speak then of lifting it up. It appears confessed, as a later inexplicable workmanship.

The principal ideas of the name Jehovah which Moses adapted from patriarchal traditions,¹¹ and perfected, as they are displayed partly in the Pentateuch, partly in the prophetic scriptures, are:

I. Jehovah is the cause of all causes, Lord of the universe, the eternal providential, immutable being above all time and space, (see Ex. xv, 18, *ibid.*¹² xxx, 22,) and is the type of all perfections. (Ex. xxxiv, 6 and 7.)

II. Jehovah is a unique, spiritual being, (Deut. iv, 2; xxxv, 39, and xxxii, 39; Is. xlv, 5 and 6, xliii, 10-14).

Therefore, it was so emphatically forbidden in the Mosaic dispensation to make any image to symbolize the Most High, (see Ex. xv, 15, xx, 4, and Deut. iv, 12-24,) for the

¹¹ See Isaac M. Wise's "History of the Israelitish Nation," page 82, where it is proved beyond all doubt.

¹² It reads there: הנה מקום אחי "there is a place by me," and not "I am in a place." This shows clearly, that God was taught as a being above all space.

immaterial one can not be represented by material images in any degree.

The great merit of Moses is of being the first who arose with energy against the generally prevailing concrete conception of God and thus shattered Heathenism to its very foundation. If now the school of Scotus Erigena, and that of Benedictus Spinoza maintain that God should be the substance of the whole world, if the school of Leibnitz considers the universe a conception of God, and Fichte and Schelling thought that God is the eternal bond of all things, the hypostatical law of the world, but against all these pantheistical suppositions must be objected, that the world appearing as imperfect, as it does, is then the substance of God himself which is unreasonable. For such a statement contradicts the idea of God as the type of eternal perfection and beauty. (See "Manual of Theology," by Fries, page 132.)

III. Jehovah is the father of mankind. (Deut. xxxiii, 6.) This idea is explicitly expressed by Malachi ii, 10, Ps. ciii, 13. Nay, his divine love extends also to all living creatures without exception, (Ps. xlv, 9, and 16, xxxvi, 7.) The pronunciation of the name Jehovah was probably Jehweh, the future tense of יהה.

יה (Jah) is the poetical expression of Jehovah.

אלה (Eloha) is also used in poetical style instead of Elohim (אלהים,) and has the same meaning, namely the primitive power. This word is derived from the verb אלה, which signifies in the Arabic language, adore, revere. The *h* of (אלה) belongs to the root, and has, therefore a

mappik (a dot) in 'ה', like נבה and a פתח ונובה under it.

IV. אל. This name of God signifies the powerful. It is derived from אול, the power.

V. אדון. The sovereign of the whole universe. It is very often used with the plural eminentiae.

VI. שדי. The almighty, omnipotence. It is also used with the pluralis majestatis.

VII. 'ה, or אלהי, or אלהים, or אלהי צבאות, meant:

1. The Lord or the eternal Lord of all beings in heaven and upon earth; for the word צבא is used in this sense, Gen. ii, 1.

2. The Lord of Heavenly Hosts, that is: the stars.

3. The Lord of the Israelitish armies; since they have to propagate the divine truth. (Ex. xii, 51, etc.)

VIII. עליון. The Most High, the Supreme and most supreme Being. (Deut. xxxii, 8, Ps. xcvi, 9, *ibid.* vii, 18.)

As epithets are used קדוש the holy, פחד, worthy of devotion (Gen. xxxi, 42), אביר, the powerful, (Gen. xlix, 24,) צור, Rock, at its protection one takes refuge: The Protector (Deut. xxxii, 4.) נואל, the Redeemer, Savior, (Is. lxiii, 16, Ps. xix, 15.) טוב ומטיב, the Good.

From all this follows, that the idea of a unique God, the ideal type of our understanding is displayed in the old biblical scriptures with such a clearness and truth, as never has been exceeded by any religious or philosophical system.

Referring the candid reader to my "*Guide for Rational Investigations*," I will not here enter into philosophical researches at large, and will only mention two popular arguments, why the Mosaic monotheism is far superior to the

Christian doctrine of the Trinity, and why the latter should be rejected by every rational man.

I. If the Godhead consist, as Christianity teaches, of three different beings, then every one of the three must have some characteristics which the others have not; but, if this must be admitted, then none of them is the composite of all perfections; for every one is wanting that which the other two have as peculiar to themselves. (See Taylor's "British Theolog. Magazine," I b.)

II. It must be admitted by every philosopher, that the divine will, as it is taught in Gen. xviii, 14, etc., or as the expression *Elohim* signifies, is omnipotent, i. e., he is able to do what he pleases, according to his perfection. Christianity maintains in general, as it is explicitly said in the symbolical books, that there are three different persons or beings in the godhead: "*alia enim est persona patris, alia filii, alia spiritus sancti.*" How is it now conceivable that all three could be almighty?—If every one of these three is able to do what he pleases, none of them can be all-powerful; hence this would contradict directly the correct idea of God. Very justly has Moses, therefore, said, Ex. xv, ii, "who is like unto Thee, O Jehovah, among the powerful, that is: Only He alone is omnipotent. (See also Deut. iii, 25; Is. xiv, 27; *ibid.* xliii, 11-14.)

I conclude this subject with the profound truth contained in the Mosaic words, Deut. vi, 4: "Hear, (*understand*,) O Israel: Jehovah, our almighty God; this Jehovah must be one unique Being!"

DIVINE PROVIDENCE *

The subject of my lecture this evening is the Doctrine of Divine Providence, demonstrated by reason; that there is a government or superintendence of the Universe by a Supreme Being who orders everything in nature for the best interests of his creatures. I believe that earnest meditation on this great and lofty topic will be a matter of the highest moment and attraction to all, irrespective of sex, age, creed, rank, condition or profession.

It will inspire us with sublime and noble sentiments of the grandeur of the divinity, the glory of God's perfections and the immensity of His government; it will bring home to our minds with a deep impression the truth of the biblical assertion: "The work of the Creator is perfect; He is righteous in all his ways." It will awaken in us a sense of our proneness to error and delusion; it will teach us how to conduct ourselves in the different conditions of prosperity and adversity that await us in the fluctuating waves of the sea of life; it will convince us that all is tending to a glorious issue, and that we shall consequently improve each of these conditions to wise ends, important purposes; it will show us how to value the blessings God bestows upon us as well as to appreciate the evils He inflicts, and to bear them better; it will make us feel the mo-

* Lecture delivered at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1874.

mentous import of the seemingly paradoxical principle of that venerable ancient savant, who taught that it is incumbent upon man to bless God for the good as well as for tribulation; it will teach us that we should always endeavor to find the silver lining to every cloud of life and cultivate a rational and habitual serenity and cheerfulness of temper—not extravagantly elated in prosperity, nor pusillanimously depressed in adversity in seasons of sorrow, even when keeping the bed of anguish and death; in time, it will thus induce us to be contented with all sublunary affairs how and whatever they may be and thus enjoy life and endure it.

Though men in all ages have entertained various and discordant opinions as to the number and character of the Deity, they agree nevertheless on this point, that the affairs of the world and of men are objects of divine attention and care. It is not only inculcated in us by many passages in the Bible, but was also taught by the ancient philosophers, as for instance by Zoroaster, Socrates, Plato, four to five centuries before the Common Era, and also by a great many others.

Cicero, who lived 106 before the Common Era, in his *De Natura Deorum*, represents Balbus speaking of the existence of gods, “Quo concesso, confidentum est, earum consilio mundum administrari,” as “that taken for granted, it must be admitted, that the world is governed by their decree.” (Lib. II, 30.) The stoic Epictetus, in his *Enchiridion* (Manual § 44) says: “Take notice, that the principal and most important duty in religion, is to possess your mind with just and becoming notions of the gods; to

believe that there are such supreme beings, and that they govern and dispose all the affairs of the world with a just and good providence."

Many philosophers maintain, that the doctrine, that the world came into existence and is preserved by the ideal Eternal Good, originated in such a wholly inner life of human intellect that, except showing its source in the human spirit, nothing can be uttered when proving it except irony against every mind, saying anything against it, or putting anything wrong in the place of it. This assertion, philosophically correct as it is, does, nevertheless, not satisfy the popular mind.

We hear generally the repeated question: If there is a kind providential care of the Most High over every creature that he has made from the lowest worm that crawls in the dust unto him that uses and rules many a natural power, how does it come, that there are so many evils in this lower world?

I will try to answer this in a plain and popular manner and I call your attention to it; for the doctrine that there is not only a general but also a particular relation between the All-kind Creator of the Universe and His creatures is of the highest moment, being the foundation and life of all practical morals and religion and consequently the basis of all human welfare.

Yes, it is this maxim alone, that gives meaning to feelings of disinterestedness, noble and heroic deeds, justice and virtue, and makes it reasonable to look to God, when we are in need and sorrow, or struck with fear and tribulation.

The fact, however, that there are so many evils and im-

perfections, miseries and misfortunes in this world, agitates not only the speculative mind of antiquity and is still embarrassing all those who dwell nowadays on this topic.

They could and cannot refrain from asking: How is it possible that there should exist any evil under the care of a beneficent, everhelping paternal ruler? If He leads and protects man from the cradle to the grave, why does He allow all kinds of man's sufferings? Zoroaster in his reflections on the origin of evil which troubles man in innumerable forms, a meditation from which philosophy arose in the childhood of nations, laid down the principle that there is an original author of the light, Ormuzd or Oromasdes, the Good, and an original author of the Darkness or Evil, Ahriman.

The first, he taught, is the source of all good and the latter of all bad events and occurrences in this lower world, and founded on this doctrine his whole religious system and statesmanship.

Socrates acknowledged a Providence with the other attributes of the divinity which have reference to good government of the world without, and in particular of man, without giving a full explanation of the questionable points.

Plato composed the first intelligent essay on Theodicy.

He maintains, that the evils in this world cannot be attributed to God, since they are the product of the unformed and variable, and of the acts in conflict with our ideas, by which conflict, life and development are brought to pass in the world; but that God adopted all the measures necessary for overcoming evil.

The followers of Zoroaster, the Manicheans, adherents to

a gnostic system which is a mixture of Parseeism and Christianity, established by a Persian, named Manes, in the year 270, maintained that there are two equal and eternal supreme principles, the one Good or God in the realm of light which produces all the happiness, the other evil Hyle or the devil in the darkness of matter which produces all calamity.

The Gnostics who pretended that they were the only men who had a true knowledge of the Christian religion held that the world intelligible and intellectual is derived from an imperfect Eon or substance emanating from God which Demiurg, the governor of the Eons, created and hence from this comes evil.

The Syrian followers of this system held that matter is an eternal and self-existing principle of evil.

Those whom the Psalmist mentions in Psalm lxxiii, Epicurus and others, for instance the Saducees, according to Josephus, deny the existence of a God altogether. Others maintain, that everything happens by chance, and finally others thought that all takes place through a blind, inevitable necessity, called fatalism, that can not be resisted by anything nor can it be explained.

All these opinions denying a Providence have been occasioned by the idea that the existence of evil upon earth is incompatible with a kind Providence. Since it is, as I have already remarked, still shaking our faith in the doctrine of Divine Providence, I will endeavor to investigate what is that which we usually call evil.

Inquiring of those who are complaining of evil upon earth, they will surely answer, if they do it sincerely, as

follows: They see with great horror the triumph of wickedness and defeat of right, "truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne." Ah, they will continue, how often is he who performs truly his duty and does much good in secret, shamefully derided, misjudged, slandered, pursued and oppressed, and he who is a selfish, deceitful, crafty man, crowned in all his undertakings with fortune and success.

Why? If there is a living, providential ruler above, how can this happen? Why does he allow, that this or that man perish in the fight for human right, justice and liberty? What misconduct, wrong or iniquity was this honest and brave man guilty of, that his whole property, earned after much toil and trouble, fatigue and anxiety and by a thousand drops of sweat, should become suddenly a sacrifice of war? What sin has this or that infant committed that it is brought up in the greatest poverty, and when its parents are gone, must wander like an outcast from house to house to ask for assistance?

And who is able to enumerate all the lamentable sacrifices which death demands? Alas! Love is snatched away from love and heart is torn from heart.

The inconsolable mother sinking down in a fainting fit upon the corpse of her sweet darling whom she bore with pain and reared with motherly tenderness, breathes in vain her burning grief and anguish.

The tears she wept intensely, and the deep sighs she sent praying to heaven for his or her recovery, all in vain.

The child lies before her like a withered flower and with it died away the contentment of her heart, the ornament of

her life and her greatest enjoyment on earth. Why did not Providence care for her agony and grief? Why had she been forsaken by the almighty, paternal Governor? How? they continue to ask, are not the elements waging war upon one another? We see very often tempests agitate the sea and plunge by their fury thousands of men into the depths where they find a watery grave. We hear of devastating thunderstorms passing over whole regions and fields and destroying in a few moments all the hopes of many an honest farmer who is working hard for his livelihood.

We read often reports, that inundations caused by the rising of rivers washed away many families with their houses and destroyed them in the flood.

Yes, we read sometimes accounts of earthquakes by which whole cities with all their inhabitants, the good and bad, innocent and wicked, just and unjust, have been buried.

Are not all these facts incontestible proofs that there is no Providence, and all the teaching about it a deceptive means of reason and a self-invented emollient of sorrow and pain? But if we examine all this considerately, we will perceive, that all the doubts thrown over the belief in a Providence proceed from the tendency to form our judgment from present appearances, rather than from consequences and connexions. This may be illustrated by several examples.

Let it be supposed, that the first signal was given for a railroad train to start at the very moment that a passenger was to board the train; he stumbles and breaks a limb. He and the spectators of such an incident might call it an

evil; but its consequences show that it was not, since having to stay at home that the broken limb may be cured, his life was saved. The train was wrecked and many passengers were killed and maimed.

Or a vessel is ready for sea. Some prospective passenger or someone near and dear to them, meet with accidents which prevent them from sailing. The vessel founders at sea and all on board are lost. At the time of the happening of these casualties, they appeared as great evils; but the subsequent disaster to the vessel proved they were not.

Many similar events occur to my mind; but as it is impossible for me to mention them all, I refer you to biographies and to ancient and modern history of the nations, where you can find them on nearly every page.

In many instances, however, the particular divine government is doubted on account of one-sided contemplations of the physical evils, which exaggerate them extremely.

It is very easy to make the annals of evil voluminous; because the world is very large.

But would the number of evils appear still so great, if the good were also taken into consideration and compared with it?

If we would place the sum of the pleasant and agreeable feelings opposite the sum of the unpleasant, the number of the latter would surely appear very small. We would then comprehend, that there is considerably more welfare prevailing on earth than suffering. We would also become sensible of the fact that the agreeable sentiments are natural and the disagreeable unnatural, and therefore the latter are easily noticed and the former overlooked.

In moments of distress, when a man is dejected and distracted and discontented with himself and his circumstances, he is forgetful of all the good and agreeable that has fallen to his lot. His holiest convictions become confounded, and he denies the perfection of the sublunary world, because looking through the clouds of unpleasant feelings, as he does, he cannot perceive it. He declares, that the world is full of imperfection, a mere valley of misery; because he is illhumored and annoyed.

And how many evils attend the superstitious follies of mankind. They subject men to imaginary afflictions and additional sorrows, that do not properly come within our lot. Omens and prognostications are handed down like a hereditary disease from generation to generation. Thus for instance a screech-owl at midnight on the top of a house alarms some family more than a band of wild Indians met on the plains.

I remember that in Germany, where there are many pedestrians, if an old woman happens to cross their path or a hare run across their way, it strikes more terror than if they would meet a roaring lion.

Some people, when starting on Friday, are tormented by anxious thoughts, expecting surely bad consequences of a journey on such an unlucky day. Others lose their self-possession at a party, when the salt is spilt and it falls toward them.

I attended once a dinner party that was full of enjoyment and mirth, when suddenly an old woman unluckily observed that there were thirteen of us at table.

The remark struck a panic terror into several who were

present, so much so that one or two of the ladies started to leave the room; but an acquaintance of mine arose and remarked: "Friends, be easy and cheerful! Our blessed Union affirms, that thirteen is a lucky number; because not one of the thirteen States that commenced the political and social Union perished, but on the contrary they have grown to the number of thirty-seven; and instead of portending that one of the company shall die, it plainly foretells that our assembly will enlarge its circle all the time."

Had not my friend found this expedient to break the omen, I question not but half the women would have fallen sick that very night.

Besides this, we often occasion ourselves physical vexations and troubles which can be avoided altogether, or at least a great part of them; as for instance, war with its train of cruelties and havocs, the consequences of selfishness, intemperance, ambition, hostile temper, etc.

Sometime we hear or are complaining of an evil which is merely negative. It consists in the disappointment of our wishes concerning beauty, wealth, power, strength, skill, genius, schemes, plans. But these and similar adornments and treasures of life can not be granted to all.

For in the first place, it lies in their nature to cease giving us pleasure, if all become possessed of them, and in the second place, were they fulfilled, they would often tend to make us a prey to calamity and ruin.

We will be convinced of the truism of this remark, when we review with a reflective mind all the strange, joyful and sad events of our life. We will find out by our own experience that sickness was often better for us than health,

and the season of disappointed hopes better than the season of success.

Looking back upon them, we will then exclaim with the greatest astonishment: Behold, this was the hand of Providence which always led and restrained, guarded and supported us!

We shall see that all which we once considered adversities and evils were in reality blessings.

We shall become aware, that if this or that of our most ardent desires had been fulfilled, we could not enjoy our present fortune and happy circumstances.

We shall further perceive, that we have sometimes wished for something, worked and prayed for it incessantly, which, if we had received, would have proved a ruin to us and others.

It must therefore be admitted that we are seldom able to judge aright of the present circumstances.

And hence, surely, there is nothing that befalls a man without a beneficent cause and no troubles come upon him that were not the means employed by a divine care to bring him to the possession of exceeding good. Yet there is another point why we find so many evils in this world. It is, that we mistake often the preponderant value of many things and therefore call them evils. It is true, that hurricanes make great ravages; but they purify the atmosphere from unhealthy mephitic.

The thunder often does great damage; but it promotes the growth of vegetation.

We hear an earthquake spoken of as a horrible scourge reducing flourishing cities to a mass of ruins and revolu-

tionizing the whole neighboring countries. But we must not forget, that usually before such catastrophes take place due warning is given for a long time by gales and tornadoes, or by hollow noises and subterranean rolling thunder, so that we may take refuge for safety in a secure place. And are not the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, as the geologists state and prove beyond doubt, the cradle of new, more developed creations, since the beginning of the earth?

Furthermore it is necessary, that Providence speak sometimes to men in thunder, tempests and earthquakes, in order to remind them of His mighty power and the weakness and frailty of all the human works they are boasting of, and that there is a ruler of the universe who established the natural laws which must obey His will.

This statement is clearly corroborated by the following fact.

It has been proved by modern investigations that the thickness of the earth's crust is not quite twenty kilometers, and consequently this thickness is, in comparison to the whole mass covering it, like that of a sheet of paper that covers an artificial globe, or as the rind of an orange is to the pulp.

This crust is filled with a fluid five times heavier than water, and has a temperature that can reduce everything to vapor.

History tells us what that white glowing matter in the womb of our planet is able to produce.

Hence, were there no Providential hand that restrained and regulated this furious power, our earth could not exist a single moment.

We read graphic accounts of fearful conflagrations which have spread fast, as for instance that of Chicago and Boston, and we ask why did not God, having been the only one who could help, put a stop to it?

But do we also consider, that our question means to say something else: Why did not God let the fire, the nature of which is to consume all that is combustible, become weary of consuming, that is, why did not He change the nature of fire?

Or when we ask, why did not He send heavy showers to extinguish it, or why on the contrary did a wind blow a gale that drove the flames upon such rows of houses as stood close together, and why did the Lord of tempests not command the wind to shift to another direction, we ask here again nothing else but that God shall intermeddle with nature. Natural law rendered it necessary, that there should be no clouds discharging themselves at that time, and nevertheless we ask both.

Nature required that a tempest should blow then, and we want that God should have silenced it and should have performed a miracle.

But this could not and can not be; for the Almighty and All-wise allows the laws of nature, which He has established, to pursue their course without interruption.

And when we all know very well, that the wheels of the great natural machine lock well into each other, that if one wheel of this machine were stopped for a moment, if one spring should yield its elasticity, what a general confusion would take place, and into what an uproar the whole world would be thrown.

Hence there has not been and never will be a pause in the operation of any natural law.

There is a kind Providence, and without precaution and discretion, there is merely danger; without pain, there is no gain and without work no reward.

The Divine Wisdom wanted to force man by the law of necessity to give up laziness and to make use of the spiritual gifts which were showered upon him.

This is the reason that the beasts of the field were furnished with their clothes, their hairy furs, and the birds were covered with feathers to give them shelter against cold and the inclemency of the weather and man was left entirely naked and unprotected. This is the reason that Providence gave to all animals their natural weapons to be able to defend themselves against their enemies.

They received remarkable strength and an extraordinary swiftness. Man, however, was not provided with anything to brave the horn of a bull, the paw of a lion, the sting of a scorpion, but he was blessed with understanding and reason.

He must invent and procure himself clothes and weapons. Thus he is forced to use his intellectual powers in order to become the Lord of the animal kingdom, to cultivate the barren soil, to build villages, towns and cities, and to devise and establish wholesome laws for social life.

It is therefore a blind trust in God, carried to excess, if anyone neglects his work, hoping that God will supply him with all that is good and necessary, without his own labor. It is an idle piety to believe to effect all by saying many

and long prayers, or to wait for a lucky chance to gain wealth, honor and respect.

The Creator has not endowed us in vain, with various faculties. We have to use them, and according to a natural law the good will produce the good, and evil must be the concomitant of evil in order to restrain it.

Man must not grumble against God's dispensations but against his own doings, in consequence of which he has very often to suffer, and this is not only demonstrated by past occurrences in all ages, but also by our own experiences in the course of our own lives.

Look at those who are possessed of an inordinate desire for honor; they are dying in a perpetual battle and uneasiness. Look at the miser; he is perishing near the source. Look at the licentious and fast living, the poison with which they have corrupted their blood and destroyed their nerves speaks stridently from their features and dissipated looks.

Behold the drunkards! They are stamped by their vice and having been tormented by different diseases, dull in sense and spirit, they drop early into their graves.

Behold the malicious and treacherous! They are shunned, have no faithful friend, fall, and everybody is glad of their ruin.

Look at the proud spendthrifts. They become impoverished and must go begging to those whom they formerly disdainfully overlooked.

Now, if you would like to know, how it happens that there are some who in their lives are neither quite happy nor quite unhappy, let me endeavor to tell you. It seems

to me, that it is the result of an inclination not to be base enough to be entirely bad, or a lack of moral courage to be entirely good.

They waver betwixt faults and virtues; hence between contentment and troubles of all kinds. The good which they perform rewards them just in the same proportion, as the wrongs which they have committed punish them and expose them to the most disagreeable circumstances.

If one wishes to be entirely happy, he must not be satisfied to be but half good.

Therefore, not the Divine Providence, but the vicious one himself is the creator of his own misery, his diseases, uneasiness and despondency.

The virtuous one, however, is wont to consider only that the end and aim of his life is to elevate and ennoble his spirit, that nothing belongs to him but his immortal soul, and everything else, such as rank, dignity of office, wealth and erudition, beauty and skill, health and sickness, friendship and persecution, material fortune and misfortune, are merely means to gain the one last and highest purpose.

If one familiarizes himself with the idea, that nothing which he is possessed of externally in this world will last; but that everything is loaned to him, and that even the best of friends, parents, brothers, sisters, consorts and children are also only loaned and allowed to walk with him a certain time, he will triumph over his unfortunate circumstances, be they ever so sad and mournful. He will not know nor perceive any evil in this world.

It is objected, that the slaughter of great numbers of

animals is inconsistent with the loving kindness of a Providence.

But if we consider this closely, we find that the misfortune of a brute is not so great as we imagine it to be. It is rather a proof of God's kindness, that being necessary to exist for food, it is also permitted to share the boon of life.

It seems to be a great misfortune, that men are born weak and helpless and are weaker than the most irrational beings.

But if a child could shortly after his birth break away from his home and take care of himself, what would become of his education and culture of mind?

Yes, even physical troubles, which are inseparable from human nature, are a source of a thousand pleasures which we could not enjoy without them, such as appeasing hunger and thirst, and the agreeable recollections of having endured many pains and woes.

Therefore people very correctly say pain "is the best spice for seasoning life," because it impresses more deeply on our feelings the value of pleasure and heightens the sentiments of agreeable circumstances.

And apart from this, bodily pain is necessary to indicate the part of the body which is afflicted, thus enabling us to become aware of the diseased place and disorder and to use remedies for curing it.

Many evils, however, exist only in our imagination, representing to us the painful feelings of others, such as the aspect of death and the convulsions of dying persons.

It is indeed a sad aspect, seizing us with horror when

we witness violent contractions of muscles; but it is after all the mere production of a blind fancy. For putting ourselves, full of vigor and longing for life, in the situation of the dying, we feel an immense sorrow which they do not know of, and we suffer pains of which they are not sensible at all.

Not dying itself, but merely the thought of it is horrible to men.

Finally, physical evils are themselves an excellent means to promote the moral education of mankind. Like a fire which consumes when touching us but which is nevertheless our greatest benefactor in providing light and heat, they afford us a great sphere of activity wherein we can exercise and develop all our noble faculties to the highest degree.

They give us many occasions for noble and magnanimous deeds in perseverance, sympathy, and so on; enhance our moral merits, form and cultivate our character, and call our attention to spiritual treasures, awakening our mind to, and establishing in us, the ideas of God, eternity and immortality.

Thus we see that the temporal good overweighs generally the evil.

Let us now investigate whether the moral evils prevailing upon earth are compatible with the doctrine of a Divine Providence, or not.

How, asks the skeptic, can a world harboring malice, iniquity and all kinds of transgressions of the holiest rights, be governed by a wise and powerful Providence?

As an answer, we put to him these questions: What

do you call the world? Is mankind the world, and the history of human life the whole history of the human race? Should God create no men at all or should He call into existence only such who can not infringe on the right and good? Or should He always oppose every transgression or action produced by a passion originating in a mistaken view? Indeed, were this to take place, God would have to perform miracles incessantly and derange every moment the whole wise and beneficent economy of nature.

And then, again, if God should always check the evil chosen by the created free will of man, the noblest thing upon earth would be wanting, namely—freedom, and such an immediate hindrance would stop only the execution of the evil design, but not the depravity of the will.

Hence, the Creator employed for the suppression of evil such means as could exist together with the nature of man thus revealing His wisdom.

He opposes the outburst of evil by its bad consequences producing external pain, and He enthroned conscience as a judge in man's bosom that it also should suppress it by inward pain.

Evil shall restrain evil.

It is further objected, that the fortune of the vicious and the misfortune of the virtuous are irreconcilable to a wise and just, Providential care.

But are we not deceived as to our judgment concerning the virtue of others? We can only judge of the actions, but not of the motives which are hidden in the recesses of the heart.

Again, our opinion of the fortune and misfortune of

others is very liable to error, because the wicked very often knows how to conceal his uneasiness and his agitated state, and the virtuous makes no ostentation of his peace of mind and soul.

Nay, to many the fortune that has fallen to their lot becomes after a time a scourge and severe punishment; while the misfortune that has been visited upon them promotes after a short interval their welfare, and places them in such happy circumstances as they never imagined or dreamed of.

It is also said, that a Divine Providence is irreconcilable with the free will of man.

For admitted that God has prescience of all events and human action, leading them with an Almighty power to reach a certain aim, how is it then possible for men to act at discretion?

To this we reply, that God's decree to govern the universe has no past and the actions of man have in the sight of God no future, that is: in the spiritual world there is no difference of time.

And should some one ask: If Providence does everything for us and delivers us from dangers and bestows upon us all kinds of blessings, what is the use of our own industry? Are not human endeavors and foresight superfluous?

To these queries, I should answer, that God foresaw our activity and took it into account, since experience teaches us that human activity is requisite, as belonging to the natural means through which Providence works.

If we have done all that is in our power, we must then

resign ourselves to the Divine Providence, whether it will allow us to reach our aim or not.

And indeed! All good success of our endeavors depends generally upon circumstances which are not in our power, but which are wisely ordained by the Most High.

Having shown, that many things appearing to us as evils have to be called good, if considered with all their consequences from different points of view, I must now remark, that it would be an arrogance of human reason to try to explain the divine admission of evil into this world.

For we know of the Universe nothing more than we do of a particle of dust, and of eternity hardly one second, and consequently it is not quite certain that all which we call misfortune is a calamity for those who have to suffer it.

I will illustrate this by a story of an ancient writer. He tells us of a man who having a house for sale, carried a brick to market to exhibit as a specimen.

You may, perhaps, smile at his folly, in supposing that any purchaser would or could judge of a whole house, which he never saw, by so small a part of it.

But would not we be guilty of much greater folly, should we attempt to form an opinion of God's conduct from that little part of it which we are able to discover?

In order to form a correct opinion of it, we ought to have a correct view of the whole. We must be God ourselves, equal to Him in wisdom, knowledge, power and goodness, to be able to review the Divine works accurately.

It follows, therefore, from all I have said, that the doctrine of a Providence that has control over all human

affairs and directs them, if necessary, according to wise laws of the good to the good, is irrefutably correct.

And as a sick man must trust in a skillful physician, though he knows not the nature and properties of the medicine prescribed for him, or as it is reasonable for a blind person to follow his guide, so is it reasonable for us to submit and trust implicitly to an infinitely better Being, though His dispensations appear to us sometimes mysterious and perplexing.

Trust in Divine Providence is the key which is given into our hands to unlock our paradise upon earth, and we need only to use it in order to gain admittance.

I will add only a few words more, namely: that this consoling truth is also corroborated by ancient and modern history.

If we look into its records, we see men and nations coming and passing away like rising and setting stars.

There is a constant changeableness; but there is also plan and law.

As the remotest stars, whose light does not reach the earth, are nevertheless counted and do not belong in vain to the solar system, so is likewise the case with the least in the horizon of humanity. Their most secret deeds exercise an influence on the whole.

Thus is the good generally lasting and the evil transient.

So for instance we perceive, that when the last sun-beam of culture was extinguished in the Byzantine empire, Providence then prepared Spain, France and Germany, in order that a new morning should begin to dawn there, and the whole West of Europe made much progress in the second

part of the Fifteenth Century that the days of the Alarics, Attilas, Genseries, Hildebrands, Dshingirkare and Tamerlanes could never return again.

Here, on this side of the Atlantic shore, a new world was opened to the nations of the old. Our beloved country, the United States, is more and more developing itself, as its population, commerce and culture increase rapidly.

Power and liberty, arts and science, dwell together within its boundaries, and the welfare of every citizen without distinction is guarded by civil and religious liberty.

It is an asylum for all the oppressed and dejected wanderers from every land; because traditionalism or the Holy Books, which were the center and rule of all teachings in all Christian empires upon earth, were and are here not considered as a source or standard of philosophical knowledge and political law.

The separation of Church and State was declared in our Constitution in unequivocal terms, and the exclusive right of giving the last decision on all subjects was and is entrusted to reason.

The heroic fathers of our country, who framed our Constitution to make us free from all tyranny and to bring about the most happy state of a true, universal brotherhood, founded their great and salutary principles, not on the Bible which can be understood and explained in different ways, not on any teachings of any book or creed, but on intellectual power, natural rights, high talents for arts, and the moral law engrafted in the consciousness of man by the Author of the Universe. Ninety-eight years of prosperity of our Union, unequalled in the history of the whole

human race, show as clearly as the meridian beams, that the established principles are aided and protected by Divine Providence, and they are progressing and developing more and more and there is no power in the world, which can ever clip or dwarf them.

Philosophy and science, with which the All-wise and All-loving Father has blessed our age, combined with their powerful ally, the press, will always wage war against all clerical drawbacks, corrupt politicians and simple minded religious dreamers and enthusiasts, who endeavor like polyps with their tentacles to meddle with politics, and nestle, wherever it is possible, their absurd ideas.

Yes, this brilliant constellation in the serene sky of our happy Union will with the sun-beams of truth, throw light upon the works of darkness and legal intolerance in all its relations and bearings and conquer them forever.

Indeed! Philosophy, science and an enlightened press, those modern monitors of reason which are plying on the stormy ocean of life, will render our free institutions secure, and no creed, religious party or sect will be able to stop the human spirits leading us with the rapidity of lightning onward and upward.

The nations of old have successively flourished and faded. Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, Jerusalem and Carthage, Greece, Macedonia and Rome played their parts on the stage of history and withered; but upon this our own great, growing nation, enlightened and humane, rest the hopes of the world to bring about light, culture, liberty and a true brotherhood. It seems to be the only one that has been divined by Providence for this great mission.

And surely we will not be disappointed; for its special, Providential care and guidance were visible to all who witnessed lately the great rebellion of slavery against freedom and the complete victory of the latter.

Let us then acknowledge, that the current of events is under the influence of God's ruling care, prescribing the courses of nations and individuals, so that all shall concur to the fulfillment of his holy will; and happy are we who live in this blessed Union, that is evidently destined by Providence to become a model republic for all nations and to lead in the march of intellect, rendering great services for truth, beauty and justice and achieving gigantic progress in the civilization and culture of mankind.

MAIMONIDES' "MAAMAR HAYICHUD"

TREATISE ON THE UNITY OF GOD *

SKETCH OF THE CONTENTS

If we take to hand all the Jewish journals in this country, we must certainly think that Judaism consists only of whimsical notions, childish dreams and a pomposity of words and ceremonies.

The great treasures of national wisdom founded on the Holy Scriptures by Jewish scholars and original thinkers are not only unknown to the whole Christian community, but also to most Israelites in this country, including all the Reverends, preaching and teaching Chazanim, and may be considered as a subject, that nobody knows anything to tell about it.

It is historically true that the Jewish literati, the Alexandrian and Spanish schools, during centuries of barbarism, and still later eminent men, as Maimonides, Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Salomon Maimon, etc., have had the great merit to preserve and propagate philosophical learning and had thus a civilizing influence on the European world. I think it will not be an unworthy task to make a choice of the above mentioned literature, to make the public familiar with it.

I hope that by so doing, I will not only silence all the hypocritical organs pouring forth a canting, sighing and

* Reprinted from the "Israelite," ix, Nos. 49, 50, 51, x. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 11.

dying Judaism, but I shall also awaken the inquiring spirit, inducing him to think for himself and will thus endeavor to produce a renewal of the national genius.

I begin with a very precious and rare specimen. It is a treatise on the unity of God, "Maamar Hayichud," composed by Rabbi Moses Maimonides in the Arabic language, containing a compendium of the philosophy and ethics of the Jewish religion, namely a kind of paraphrase of the first two sections of the Hebrew work, entitled "Mishnah Torah" with omission of all regarding the casuistic laws.

It seems, that the author has written this treatise for the public at large without regard to religion or sect, and I hope that the reader will read it with such great interest as it deserves.

I

All those abstract ideas which are attributed to the first cause of all causes by prophetic and philosophical authors are not liable to any change.

Hence are all the actions of the first cause (God) immutable and must always remain in the same condition as he performed them.

Because all existences are originating from him in an absolute¹ perfection, the idea of increasing and diminishing it, is inconceivable.

¹The author remarks also in his "Moreh Nebuchim," iii. 25. The Pentateuch commences with the words: "And God saw all that He has created, and lo! it was good" and ends with the passage: "The Creator, His work is perfect," etc. By this he evidently wishes to lay down the principle of the perfection of the creation. And indeed is the idea of optimism that the world exists by the ideal of perfection the highest religious idea.

On this depends our opinion about the destination of man and the idea of evil.—The perfection is in the world of truth above us, but imperfection, we must search for it in ourselves.

This is the meaning of the passage in Deut. xxxii, 4: The Creator: His work is perfect and His attributes are everlastingly true, He is a God of truth without any failing, He is righteous and upright. And as Solomon said, Ecclesiastes iii, 14, that the divine actions can neither be increased nor diminished in any way. For would the divine actions be changeable, the Most High would also be mutable. [Being however, the first cause, He must remain the same for perpetuity and all His actions are therefore never changing.]

Although we find very often in the Bible some anthropomorphical expression, as the hand, foot, face, speech of God and the like, by which we are induced to infer the sensuality and changeableness of the Most High, I will prove that such language has been used only in order to make also narrow-minded persons understand. Attached to sensuality they are not able to rise from their low atmosphere in which they live into the horizon of reason.

Our sages have therefore very ingeniously remarked: "The Bible is humanly speaking," that is, it is very often spoken in the Scriptures in an allegorical way to mankind in order to make it conceivable to all, however different their degrees of understanding and their capacities for comprehension may be.

It was necessary to set aside those endowed with a clear reason for the sake of the weak-minded. For according to the existing different capacity there is a great variety in

the degrees of comprehension of the Unity of God. The one has a perfect knowledge, the other confined views, the one a sharp mind, the other a poor imagination and as the All-merciful, whose mercies extend to all his works, wants that every one shall enjoy the highest degree of happiness *id est*, perfection by a true knowledge of God, some truisms were expressed in anthropomorphical language, that every reader and hearer shall understand and may become convinced of them.

Therefore have most of the prophets also accommodated themselves to the capacities of understanding of their contemporaries, in order to be better understood.

Since it is to be taken for a certainty, that God as the first cause of all things is incorporeal, we can not attribute to Him corporeal properties, as, composition, division, space, time, quality, height and depth, right and left, forward and backward, standing and sitting. He is above time and without beginning and end.

He is immortal and has not a life like ours, and His purpose and knowledge is not like ours.

He has neither motion nor rest, neither anger nor pleasure, neither anxiety nor courage, neither speech nor taciturnity.

Justly have our ancient sages remarked (Chagiga, 15.): In the spiritual world there is neither standing nor sitting, neither forward nor backward nor weariness.

It should be a general principle, that we can not attribute to God any properties of changeableness. If, for instance, we would say, that God is sometimes pacified and sometimes raging, He speaks sometimes, and sometimes is

He silent, then He is liable to change and everything that is changeable must necessarily be changed by something; but the Most High being the First Cause and the most perfect without any failings can consequently never be changed.

Hence all the above mentioned and similar expressions in the Pentateuch as well as in all the books of the prophets must be metaphorically understood.

This is also corroborated by the prophet Jeremiah. He says: (Lamentations v. 19.) Thou, O God, dost not change.

NOTE—The author gives us in this chapter a complete analysis of the human ideas respecting attributes of God, and I will represent them now in logical sequence:

1. God is an absolute necessary being, supposing to be the first cause of all things.

2. He is the ideal of all perfection, therefore independent, not produced and self-existent, endless and unchangeable.

3. He is a unique and single being.

4. He is incorporeal, omnipotent, without beginning and end, above all time and space.

5. He is a spirit in absolute reason without senses and without an effected thinking, omniscient, almighty, all-merciful and all-wise, inconceivable, impenetrable Lord of the universe.

This Theism as taught by Maimonides contradicts the Pantheism of Spinoza, who maintains, that God is the substance of the world, the school of Leibnitz considering the world as an idea of God, and finally the fantastical philosophers, Fichte and Schelling, who consider God as an eternal tie of all beings; because our authors hold it as a settled

opinion, that God is not the substance of the world or a being of all beings, but an absolute first cause of all things.

Section 1

In regard to our love of the first cause (God) and reverence to Him, blessed be this fountain-head of all goodness, the Bible, Deut. vi, 5, and xi, 1, reads "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and *ibid.* vi, 13, "And thou shalt reverence the Lord thy God."

If you like now to know what is the best course to take in order to love God truly, I advise you, that you reflect on the universe which is so wonderfully regulated by His infinite wisdom.

Take into consideration His actions, ponder upon His government of the world and general providential care, and then consider, that He called you into existence out of nothing, favored you with understanding, by which you are among all the creatures the best and nearest to Him; He appointed you to serve Him, and commanded you to think always of Him by a constant study, that you may enjoy infinite bliss and a prosperity without end, a happy immortality which no eye has ever seen and no ear heard of, as it reads: Isaiah lxiv, 3, "No eye has ever seen it besides God alone," that is, Nobody knows the true nature of it, except God.

Having considered these subjects closely, you will find that all human intellect is too weak and all the human ideas too poor to conceive the essence of God, His perfection and beautiful order established by Him.

It is no doubt, that a fervent incomparable love of God

will seize your heart and soul and you will ardently long but for Him, as David said: "My soul thirsteth for God," etc., (Psalms xlii, 3).

If you think then of the insignificance of your body and its low origin, that it is only a vessel of moisture, a house of uncleanness and that it becomes finally a bad smelling carcass, and if you further compare the littleness of your body in comparison with the earth which is only very small in regard to the sun, that is only again a very small part of the whole universe which is beyond all measure as David said, (Psalms viii, 4). If I see thy heavens, etc., and that you have once to meet the great Almighty king, it is no doubt that you will be moved deeply, tremble and humble yourself before the greatness and majesty of God to whom all bow down in reverence.

But as your knowledge of the Creator conforms always to your knowledge of His works, I will now turn your mind to some of that, which the learned men teach about the construction of the universe, in order that you may awaken out of your worldly sleep and cease to slumber in ignorance.

All the existences are of three kinds: 1. Beings composed of matter and form, originating and passing away; as animals, plants and minerals.

2. Beings also composed of matter and form. The forms, however, are eternal with subordinate accidental changes, as such of space or place.

Their actions are supported by their Creator, who is Himself and His law immutable. These are the spheres and all that they contain, whose matter and form differ altogether from that of the sublunary elements.

3. Separate forms without all material matter, i. e., angels. These are altogether incorporeal.

And although the prophets represented them as having wings and consisting of fire or as having a human or an animal face, all this must be understood metaphorically.

And this I prove by the following argument:

Because we have some passages in the Bible, where similar expressions are used respecting God Himself, as for instance, Deut. iv, 24, "And he is an eating fire." It is proved beyond doubt, that God is incorporeal; hence He is no fire and the expression in the Bible is only a metaphor.

It is the more so, because some prophets represent one and the same angel in a very different mode. Hence it follows that he has during a short time a resemblance to different forms, i. e., he has no constant form at all. The angels differ only from each other by their different perfection in the knowledge of God, and according to which they assume name and rank.

Probably has king Solomon pointed at that, saying: (Eccles. v, 7.) "For there is a superior," etc.

There are ten different ranks of angels according to the ten names mentioned in the Bible.

The most exalted angels are 1. the Chajoth Hakodesh. 2. Chajoth. 3. Ophanim. 4. Erelim. 5. Chashmalim. 6. Zeraphim. 7. Elohim. 8. Bene Elohim. 9. Cherubim. 10. Ishim.

The last rank is called Ishim, who are the nearest to men in the sublunary world and from whom originate the prophetic communications and forms as they are repre-

sented. But, nevertheless, all that they understand, no human being can comprehend.

These ten ranks of angels are living forms, have a certain degree of knowledge of their Creator according to their ranks.

They can not comprehend, however, the essence of God and only He alone knows Himself perfectly.

All creatures from the highest degree of perfection to the lowest proceeded and proceed from the very essence of the First Cause.

God knowing Himself perfectly, He must consequently know everything He called into existence. As David said, Psalms xcix, 9: "Who built the ear, does He not hear?"—But the knowledge of God and his essence are one and the same, and are not as our knowledge and body differing from one another in every respect.

God being perfect and self-sufficient, His life and knowledge are one; for if this knowledge had a separate existence, we have to suppose then a plurality in Him, which would contradict our conviction and religious principle, of His being an absolute unity.

This is a truism which can only be disputed by those whose understanding is prevented, as it were, by a partition-wall to penetrate into the most true idea of God's unity.

Indeed, much is to be said on this topic and all that I have said here is only like a drop of water taken from the ocean.

Nay, all human intellect and speech would become weary to expatiate only upon a small part of this subject.

Our sages call these investigations the mystic science of God or metaphysical mysteries and enjoined on us the duty, that we should not communicate or explain it to the public at large, but to distinguished men of eminent learning and even to them only by degrees.

But perceiving that science and knowledge are declining among us by the oppression of the ruling nations, I will favor now the worthy to become initiated in some of the prophetic and true doctrines handed down to us by the disciples of the prophets and our sages.

NOTE BY TRANSLATOR.—The hypothesis which our author laid down, that there are spirits or angels of different ranks, I shall not argue; because although such ideas are mere productions of a dreaming fantasy, it is nevertheless very probable that the human spirit stands not on the top of the ground scale of beings in the whole erection of innumerable worlds.

It may be, that in higher regions there are in existence purer and more perfect spirits than the human who are not prohibited, by a separation of a corporeal and spiritual perfection, to unite their real internal with the external spiritual world.

Nay, there may be holy spirits who need not any sensual stimulation to exist, but live spontaneously in pure self-subsistence of their spiritual power.

The existence of such beings as spirits or angels, however, can not be known by experience, and therefore all opinions, conceptions and narratives about them belong merely to the poetical province.

Section 2

There are seven spheres which have the following names: Shamaim, Rehia, Zebul, Machon, Maon, Velon and Araboth.

Each of these names has a signification requiring a very deep knowledge and is a prophetic mystery.

The lowest sphere to us is that of the moon, after this follows Kochab, etc. The eighth sphere contains the fixed stars, and the ninth encompasses all and is moving from East to West.

All the spheres are as a transparent glass and therefore the stars shine through and appear to us as if they were all in one sphere.

NOTE.—Maimonides is mistaken that this system has been handed down to us by the prophets; because the very name given to the sixth sphere shows clearly its birth-place. "Velon" is not a Hebrew but a Latin word, namely: "Velum," corresponding to the English "Veil."

Again if this system had been founded on tradition, how is it possible that a dispute took place about it? (See Chagiga, Section 2.)

Some of the spheres are moving like the ninth from east to west, others from west to east. There is neither space nor matter between them.

The essence of them has neither lightness nor gravity, senses nor color.

And although they appear to us blue, it is not owing to the real existence of such a blue substance, but to the air which effects the blue color.

They are perfectly round as a ball, whose centre is that

of the earth, between which and them earth, water, air and fire are circumambient in a concentrical way, and are again surrounded by the sphere of the moon.

There are however, some stars in eccentric spheres.

The constellation and motion of the stars show, that there are eighteen concentrical and eight excentrical spheres.²

The Greek astronomers wrote a great many books on this topic.

The ninth sphere encompassing all, was divided by the ancient literati into 12 divisions corresponding to those of the Zodiac which is in the eighth sphere, although they do not correspond any more with the constellations³ since the deluge. They have slackened their movement very much which is from the east to the west. Some stars are larger than the earth and some are smaller.

The moon is smaller than the earth and the earth smaller than the sun. The sun is the largest and (Kochob) Mercur the smallest star. All the stars and spheres are animated⁴ and possess understanding and knowledge.

Every one of them knows his beginning according to his degree among the existing beings. They praise their Creator, thank and extol him. They conceive their essence like the angels, but are inferior to them and superior to men in regard to their comprehension. As David said, Psalms xix, 2: "The heavens proclaim the essence of the

²The author of the book Kusri maintains there are over 40, Aristotle 56, and Tracaster 77.

³According to the opinion of the Talmud Jerushalmi (Pesach. T. I.) the Zodiac has been without function during the deluge.

⁴We know now over fifty elements and this fact overthrows the whole system of the author.

Creator, and the sphere tells us his wonderful works." By this, however, is not meant that they utter distinct expressions or words, but that they have intuitive speaking similar to human abstract ideas.

There is a separate element in the sphere of the moon being altogether different from that of all spheres. This element consists in four forms which differ likewise from those of the spheres.

The first form is that of fire. This part touches the sphere of the moon and is the essence of fire.

The second is the form of air. This part follows after the essence of fire and is the essence of air.

The third form is water. This part follows after the essence of air, and is the essence of water. The fourth is the form of earth. This part is combined with the others and is the essence of earth.

Hence is the sphere of the moon surrounded with the four mentioned essences. The earth, however, is encompassed by the water with exception of that which the divine wisdom appropriated to the use of the creatures.

The air surrounds both on all sides and the fire all three. Everything is pervaded by them.

These four essences are no living beings and do not possess any consciousness, but they are dead elements, led only by the support of their Creator, by the means of the several powers which He bestowed upon them.

They generally keep their place and perform their actions. As soon as they leave occasionally their natural places, He leads them back to them to last there.

This is the law of the Creator, blessed be His name, in regard to all these appearances.

It is never altered nor changed as David expresses himself in the Psalm in praise of God, that the heavens, etc., and fire and water and all His wonderful creatures never overstep their boundaries set to them.

Even so he says (Psalms cxlii, 6). There is a law for them which they will not trespass nor change.

If any one reflects on the prophecy of Ezekiel and on its general contents, he will agree with me in all that I have said respecting the four ⁵ elements, namely, that they are all set in motion by one mover, and there is a connection between the sublunary and upper worlds. He will also admit that we will find out in this way great mysteries and

⁵ The ancient philosophers having had a very imperfect knowledge of astronomy and not having conjectured in the slightest degree the system of gravitation, they thought and even Aristotle and all his followers were of the same opinion, that the stars, being in constant motion, must consequently be animated living beings.

Some, as for instance the Chaldeans, considered them as gods and worshipped them. Some venerated them as demi-gods, and some thought that they were angels. They observed also that some stars have more influence on the earth than others, they supposed them to be of different ranks, consisting in superior and inferior gods or angels.

That our ancestors considered the stars as living beings or angels, is proved by several passages in the Bible. See Judges v: 20, Job xxxviii: 7, 8, etc.

It is no wonder when on a starry night innumerable spirits shone so brightly over a people with a fiery oriental imagination, that they had appearances of God and angels on every corner. Any phenomenon that happened in the atmosphere, was surely nothing else than the appearance of God or an angel.

Since the stars are only shining bodies of matter, the angels cease to appear any more.

that we will perceive deep and wonderful ideas in regard to the existence of all beings as I have already illustrated in my work entitled "Moreh Nebuchim," (Guide for Perplexed). By this you will be able to explain the connections and relations which are between material and spiritual world.

Would this not be the case, there could be no way leading to the ascension to the Most High, nor could the gaining of a holy existence ever be effected.

This is the meaning of the ladder of ascension to heaven which our father Jacob of blessed memory saw in his dream mentioned in the Bible.

I have expatiated upon this subject in my book mentioned above and have explained it there at length in order to diffuse knowledge and to awaken by its beams all who sleep in ignorance and that they may enjoy the light which shines brightly to the good and worthy.

The four essences existing in the sphere of the moon are the elements of all beings and perishables of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdom, etc.

All natural substance, with exception of the four elements are composed of matter and form, and the matter is a composition of the four elements which can be resolved into them.

The elements however consist of matter and form; but can never be changed into any other substance.

There is a style, an abstract substance, that the noblemen of Israel (Ex. xxiv, 10 and 11) saw in a prophetic vision as I have already fully explained in the "Moreh Nebuchim."

The nature of fire and its motion is upward and that of the earth downward. The nature of water is to rest on the place where it is; but if it is rising on high it falls down to the surface of the earth. The air is between the water and the fire, and this is its appropriated place.

The fire is naturally hot and dry and the brightest among the four elements. The air is warm and wet. The water is cold and wet. The earth is cold and dry and is the heaviest among them. The water follows it in regard to weight and therefore it is encompassed by all three.

The four elements, when displaced, rush back to their sources.

The sublunary beings form a classification of ranks, commencing with the elements, a composition of which form then the minerals. After the most perfect of them began to exist the realm of plants, and after the most perfect plant developed itself a living creature endowed with feelings, spontaneous motion and breathing.

The most perfect among the creatures is the human species, and among them the prophets attained the first degree, the ingenious the second, and the wise men the third.

After these follows the great bulk of the nations.

The designs of the Almighty, blessed be His name, are also in this respect unsearchable.

All the substances which are composed of the four elements, can be resolved and changed into different species, but finally they return to the elements.

Hence it follows that it is always an originating and withering, and that there is nothing more nor less in the

whole household of nature; because what the one is wanting, is added to the other.

The elements, however, are changing by parts in their touching points until they reach the spheres.

There is no form without matter and no matter without form.

They differ from one another, and the form can not be in existence for itself.

The form of the soul of the animals is the instinct which is given to them by the Creator. The intellectual power, speaking and conceiving abstract ideas, is the form of man.

This rational human soul is according to the Bible not a material substance as Solomon said, (Ecces. xii). And the soul returns to God.

This rational soul differs from the sensitive producing nutrition, sensual desires and propagation; it is as an intellectual form—the real form of the soul.

In the material world everything is returning to its first source by the perpetual change; and so it is in the spiritual world when the soul is developed; but if the spirit remains uncultivated, it is wanting such a prosperity. As Solomon said, Prov. xix, 4, it is not good that the soul is not developed by knowledge.

Because as the soul is not a material substance nor needs any such, it will then, by the separation from the body, undoubtedly return to the fountain-head, where she came from, and will live there in eternal bliss, or if it can not return, it will be a constant abomination and this would be a great curse (see Dan. xii, 2 or Is. lxvi, 24.):

And they shall go and see, etc., that their worm will not die and their fire will not be extinguished, etc.

The contents of this chapter contain only a few outlines of all that can be said on this subject and which was called by our philosophers, "Maase hayad," work of the hand (the Creation). It consists of profound mysteries and shall only be communicated to distinguished, learned men.

The contents of the former chapter they called "Jediath Meziath Hakdushah," the knowledge of the existence of the Most Holy.

Our sages admonished all the learned men, that they shall not treat on metaphysical subjects in the presence of any illiterate man.

All those who are favored of the skies with intellectual power and have risen far beyond the material horizon, longing to get a clear insight into the highest subjects and designing eagerly to enjoy that pleasure of finding the real truth of the most important topics, and should God grant them to lift up their heads and make investigations respecting the angels, spheres, essence of stars and their constellations, etc., the connection of the upper with the lower world, the wisdom of the Creator as it is revealed in the structure of the human body, the appearance of an immaterial being in a material body and its influence upon it, the man being a microcosm, it is no doubt that such meditations will increase their love of the Creator.

No human understanding, however, is able to comprehend thoroughly the perfection, beauty and excellent classi-

fication of all beings, as well as the possibility that order and life be always as God has ordained.

All these remain wonders of an infinite circumspection, and in fact there is no beauty as truth and perfection being only in God the source of all existences.

And as one gets tired to look at the sunshine on the wall steadily, and consequently will never hope to see the essence of the sun as it is, so become the eyes of our heart and thoughts weakened and finally sealed-up when looking into these subjects and hence, so much the less can we expect to comprehend the essence.

Truly remarked King David: "You have to be still when you are reaching after truth," i. e., there is a certain limit to human knowledge.

These meditations were called by our sages: Paradise or Park.

The story is well known that four wise men went into the park, i. e., have studied metaphysics, and only one had a safe return, although all these men had great intellectual faculties. (See Treatise Chagigah.)—From this statement it follows: that the Creator appoints a prophet whom he wishes to be so, and speaks to such a one whom he has chosen.

Prophecy, however, is only given to the worthy.

In regard to this our sages remarked, that the qualification to become a prophet is the possession of great psychological knowledge and moral and intellectual perfection.

Such a one is enabled to strengthen his soul to enter into higher regions, to retire entirely from this visible and perishable world and to unite himself with the eternal. Yes,

avoiding all intercourse with the world he will gain a profound knowledge of his Creator.

He exalts his soul in such a manner, that he approaches the throne of the Almighty King, longing to be united with the living forms or angels, and to be combined with the holy Spirit.

Having reached such a high degree, he is in the rank of angels, called Ishim.

Our sages signified this position by the expression, the active intellectual power.

Such a one will then rise aloft and comprehend as much as it is assigned to him and that which is too sublime for us.

It may be very properly said of him that he went from darkness to light and came to a fire without being fire and to a heaven without being heaven.

The prophet Isaiah pointed at this, lxvi, 24, saying, that there will be once a renovation of heaven and earth.

In order that King Saul should have such a high spiritual degree, the prophet Samual advised him, when he was anointed as king of Israel to join the religious order of those men who prepared themselves for prophets.

Go and study with them, said he, and thou wilt be influenced by their high intellectual powers and turned into another man.

There are different ranks among the prophets respecting the prophecy as there are different degrees among the literati in regard to their learning.

It is of no consequence regarding the prophecy whether it is in a nightly vision or in a waking state at noon day.

Because if the mind becomes still and is not disturbed by the material world, the body feels a trembling and shaking and the animal strength is weakening.

All conceptions, thoughts and feeling of the senses cease altogether, and only the power of speech left in the abstract intellect, imprints on the mind what shall be prophesied and all the metaphors, symbols, etc., plunge into the depth of the soul combined with a clear explanation, and then the intrinsic speech changes into an external, expressing all by distinct words. Some prophets speak in allegories and explain them, and some communicate them without any explanation.

The prophet can not prophesy at any time when he likes to do so; but he must be prepared always, in order to be able to prophesy by clear thoughts, purity of mind, separation from all worldly and sensual connections, serenity of temper, and the soul's cheerfulness. So it is remarked, in Pesachim, 117, and Sabbath, 30.

The spirit of prophecy can not rest upon such prophets who are cheerful.

The disciples of the prophets have therefore used all kinds of vocal and instrumental music when they prepared themselves for prophecy.

Just so acted the prophet Elisha. As the king of Judah asked him whether he should wage war upon the enemy and Elisha had grown angry about the idolatry of the king of Israel who accompanied the same, he said, that they shall call to him a musician to play before him, and after having done so, the spirit of God rested on him. (See II Kings, iii, 15.)

Even so became the king David inspired after having been singing and rejoicing in the temple. He laid aside his kingly robe, and said, that the most worthy is such a one who dare appear before his master without a veil.

All those preparing themselves for the prophecy and desiring eagerly to have a prophetic vocation, they succeed sometimes and sometimes not.

Prophecy contains sometimes hints from the prophet himself in order to communicate to him alone something of the divine wisdom which he shall not promulgate, and sometimes it contains a message to some particular nation or to certain men of a city whom the prophet shall correct in their behavior, remind them to do good and warn them not to commit any evil. This is impossible to perform without divine power and knowledge.

Every prophet who appears after Moses and says that God has sent him, needs not perform any miracles, as for instance, to divide the sea or to change natural laws, but he has to reprimand the people and what he says, must correspond with the principles of right and justice.

He must also possess all requirements necessary to a prophet as I have mentioned them above, recommending the worship of God alone, rejecting a divine plurality.

He must especially endeavor to enjoin such good laws which promote a general welfare of the people and warn them of all the evils.

Does he appear in this way, then we are in duty bound to receive him as a prophet and to obey his teachings, if they do not contradict the fundamental principles of the Mosaic religion as I have laid down and explained them

elsewhere; because our main aim is to have a divine service, to do away all prejudices and self-delusion and walk justly.

As the temperaments ⁶ of men just so differ their characters from one another.

There are some who fly into passion and can hardly be pacified, and some who are easily appeased and can hardly be made angry.

Some are very proud and some very modest and humble, and in the same way are all the other peculiar qualities or habits of men.

Some are inclined to extremes and some observe a mean in everything.

Although it is necessary that one wishing to gain excellent characteristics and praiseworthy and valuable qualities, that he tries to go to extremes, he must nevertheless keep the golden mean in practical life.

One shall, for instance, not always curb the angry feeling and his indignation against creatures, nor shall he quit the power of wrath altogether; because he needs it, that he may be able to control by this all sensual desires, and that absolute evil shall hide itself from him.

If there is any one, who is, in regard to principle, in equal distance from two extremes in all his doings, he is called a wise man, a physician of the soul; because he restores her to health and keeps her in the right course.

But if there is any one who cultivates his mind in such a manner that it is leaning to the extreme good, he is

⁶There are four temperaments: the bilious, sanguine, phlegmatic and melancholic.

called a pious man. Nevertheless it is remarked by our sages, that we shall always observe the middle between two extremes and shall imitate always the attributes of the All-merciful.

He is merciful, so be you; He is gracious, so be you; He is holy, and so be you.

Should any one conceive that he loses his moral equilibrium, he shall strive that his soul be cured of such a dangerous condition.

And in fact the soul is liable to sickness and health just so as the body.

This is the way how it is possible to find out whether the soul is in a healthy or in a sickly condition.

Observing, that she is desirous of doing good, taking the greatest delight in laudable action and would be grieved to the socket if from this action would result anything unworthy and detestable, she would experience great affliction and give it up altogether; this is a proof, that she is perfect and lives in a happy state.

But if it is perceived that the soul takes pleasure in evil doings, that give many troubles to the welfare of another, and even to that of an enemy and the result of which gives him great delight if it has only not any disadvantage to himself, annoying always the happiness of fellow-men and being unable to leave off such an imperfection, this spiritual state is wrapt in a veil and is separated from the truth that can not be reached, as it has been already substantiated by reason, tradition, and explanation.

It is a matter of course, that nothing can receive any-

thing that is not equal and does not correspond with the same.

Considering now, that no soul can exist before the eternal truth without being recompensed for good or evil doing, he will firmly adhere to the truth; because truth is real good and is not capable of any foibles.

No one can live in this sanctuary who is defiled by any evil. We are therefore always admonished to know our soul, to purify her of all bad habits and adorn her with excellent qualities.

The low and despicable qualities are: pride, impudence and constant sensual desires.

Sublime qualities are: modesty, liberality, and to do good to the enemy, by so much the more to the fellow-men.

For it is not praiseworthy and meritorious for any man to love only his friend and to be so limited to bound his horizon, that he does not see anybody else but such a one.

In regard to the providential care of possessing the noble qualities, they are bestowed upon those prophets and leaders of the people, whom God has chosen.⁷

The prosperity which the righteous will enjoy is the future life without death, good without mixture of evil and where will be no sin nor temptation.

As it reads in the Bible, that the days of thy life may be

⁷ It seems that our author alluded here to the qualities of Mohammed, the author of Mohammedanism; because as he said himself in Alkoran 7: 117, that he has been an "Amai" meaning in the Arabic language "an unlearned man" and he had neither the noble qualities represented here necessary for a prophet, it is evident that he was not chosen by God as a prophet.

long (Deut. vi, 2,) that is you will be happy in a world that will be full of bliss and without an end.

The righteous receive as their retribution and reward such an eternal happy life and bliss, and so does death separate the wicked from all this and they remain in such a deplorable state, that no human being can depict it.

The regulations for balneation are: neither to take a bath with a hungry stomach nor with a filled one, and therefore the most suitable time for taking a bath is after breakfast.

The body shall be overspread with tepid and the head with warm water, namely, so warm as the body can endure it, and then shall the water in which the bath is taken be made colder by degrees.

On the head and back shall not be put lukewarm water until their perspiration ceases altogether.

One shall not stay too long in the bath and shall neither leave it until having dried well the body, dressed himself and covered the head.

He may then either rest or sleep a little while and eat afterward, but shall not drink cold water, and much the less when being in the bath and if feeling thirsty, he shall drink water mixed with a little wine.

Bleeding shall be made use of only in case of need in spring, and it is highly necessary to have repose during the time bleeding takes place.

A person over fifty years of age shall never be bled.

Too much efflux of the seminal liquid destroys the kernel of life and the main strength of the body, weakens the eye-

sight, the hair of the head falls off and the teeth come out.

The wise Solomon very correctly informs us of committing such an evil. (See Prov. vi, 3.)

Therefore if any one likes to live without being troubled with sickness and infirmities and enjoy his life happily, he shall not misuse nature, but shall act in all his doings corresponding to the natural demands.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER

(Directed to one of his friends.)

There are two classes of religious men who differ from each other.

The one possesses a perfect knowledge and piety, and the other has no judgment at all.

These act to the detriment of others and still more to themselves, and are called by our sages foolish-pious and corrupters of the world who ruin humanity, as it reads in Sota, 21: "A cunning miscreant, an immodest female and a foolish-godly person ruin the world."⁸

⁸ This class of men are very numerous represented in this country and styles itself: the pious orthodox Jews. They break the holy law and profane all the festivals with the exception of New Year and the Day of Atonement; but nevertheless they would not allow the abolishment of the second day of Yom Tov. They attend divine service very seldom and nevertheless they would not allow abolishment or alteration of the prayers composed during and for the middle ages.

They trample on the essence of Judaism and lay special stress upon all external trifles.

They join so-called benevolent societies for mutual benefit. But

I will now try to depict the manners of a person of the first and of one of the second class.

Those who belong to the first class are not engaged in any business except their own.

They avoid all worldly affairs and all disagreeableness and burdens accompanying the same, silent, fulfil their duty toward God, as it reads Micah, 8. "And walk humbly with thy God" and are therefore beloved by God and man.

They do never commit any perversity, nor make use of the right of retaliation and rather suffer wrong in order not to be guilty of injustice.

Those who belong to the second class, however, meddle arrogantly with the affairs of others, are involved in disputes and always meet with resistance.

They can not deviate anger and lamentation, unbecoming expressions and improper actions by their pretended zeal for their religion, and produce the hatred of men against themselves.

Thus they demoralize the world and corrupt their religion.

Our sages perceiving this have chosen a retired life, they would not support any literary undertaking with one dollar and thus let the spirit of Judaism die out.

And then they clamor and take up a lamentation, that Judaism is declining.

O, ye foolish and blind hypocrites! If you extinguish in your spiritual night all the lights of knowledge, how can you expect that the right ways of Judaism shall be discovered?

You are the greatest enemies that Judaism ever had, and you yourselves are the destroyers and fiendish corrupters of it. You will once have to give an account of your stubborn wickedness before the Most High who will in spite of you protect His holy people.

avoided the courts and devoted their life to the study of the arts and sciences.

May the Lord help us, that we may gain happiness on earth as well as in the world to come.

And now, sir, consider all what I said, take it to heart, and let the rules I have laid down be always as guides before your eyes and the decree of Heaven will then surely aid us to obtain a happy achievement.

THE MESSIAH *

An Open Letter to Isaac Leeser

Complying with your wishes expressed in a note (*Occident*, Vol. No. 2), I send you the following remarks, and I hope that you will insert them in your valuable paper.

Although we differ widely in our opinions and thoughts, we can and should, nevertheless, discuss religious matters in a dispassionate, dignified manner, becoming Jewish theologians who aim at nothing else than to establish and promote biblical truisms as expounded by our ancient sages.

If you, as a champion of your party, however, dispute religious opinions in a manner as you have done in your note, what shall your followers do? **אם בארזים נפלה השלהבת מה יעשו**? **מ"ט פנים לתורה**? **איזובי הקיר**? You are well aware, that there are, as our sages said, what is now the cause of your displeasure, if I expound the Law in another way than you do?

Let us, therefore, not trespass beyond the bounds of moderation and propriety, and discuss the subject with dignity.

You have said: "It is humiliating, that when a gentile comes, from conviction, to be instructed in our holy religion, there is a man who holds the post of Rabbi, and still teaches that one of our fundamental principles is not to his taste, and that he does, therefore, not believe in it."

* Reprinted from the "*Occident*," xviii, Nos. 6, 13, 22.

But tell me, sir, do you call a gentile comes from conviction, if the same is troubled with extravagant thoughts in religious matters, as it is here the case?

If common sense is worth any thing, and הלכות גרים shall be our guide in the subject at issue, I must tell you that, according to my opinion, no conscientious Rabbi would admit this man to embrace Judaism.

Regarding the belief in the coming of a Ben David as a king Messiah, I am astonished that you have said: "This fundamental principle of the Jewish religion is not to my taste, and that I do, therefore, not believe in it."

Sir, I reject this principle not on account that it does not suit my taste, but on account of my irrefutable arguments which compel me to do so. Have you forgotten that Rev. Jacobs debated with me this very principle in many articles in your valuable paper, and that he has not been able to refute me? (See *Israelite*, Vol. v. No. 16.)

But if you think that you will do it now, I will give a synopsis of all that I have said on this topic since many years, and if you shall refute my arguments, then I will acknowledge publicly that I am wrong and you are right; on the contrary, I hope you will confess that I am right and you have been mistaken.

In order not to be misunderstood, however, I have to add, that I only repudiate the belief in the coming of a Ben David as a king Messiah, but not the belief in a גאולה *id est*, I believe, nay, I am rather convinced, that in future days will be fulfilled what has been prophesied in the Holy Scriptures: "Then shall God be king over all the earth; on that day shall God be one and His name One."

My arguments that a Talmudical Jew must reject the doctrine of the belief in the coming of a Ben David as a king Messiah are:

1. This doctrine is neither mentioned *in the whole Pentateuch, nor in any book of the Prophets.*
2. It is not counted among the six hundred and thirteen (תר"ג מצות), nor among the (מצות דרבנן) Rabbinical laws.
3. It is anti-biblical, as I have proved by different passages from the Bible itself.
4. It was rejected by a great many Talmudical and Rabbinical authorities. (See my quotations from Talmud Bably, Yerushalmy, etc.)

I will only adduce here the opinion of the רמב"ן, who remarks in his work entitled *ספר הגאולה* as follows: "If we also heartily admit, etc., that God will never permit us to return to Palestine, all this would be of no consequence whatever to the essential law; because we have not to keep it on account to enjoy once in eating the fruits of Palestine or to bathe in the thermal waters of Tiberias, etc., to perform divine service in the temple at Jerusalem; but we have to perform all the Mosaic laws that we may live happy in this world, and that our soul may gain eternal bliss, which is signified by the term, 'Gan Eden,' " &c.

אם נסכים בלבנו וכו' ושיאריך ה' עלינו הגלות לאין סוף וכו' כל זה לא יזיק בעקר התורה מאומה כי הנה אין תכלית גמולנו לאכול מפרי הארץ ותרחץ בחמי טבריא וכו' וגם לא הקרבנות ועבודת בית המקדש הם תכלית חפצו ממנו אבל גמולנו ומבטנו הוא חיי העולם התענוג הנפש התענוג הנקרא גן עדן וכו' (ספר הגאולה פ"ב)

In conclusion, I have to correct your misconception in regard to the "Minhag America."

You say: "We have issued a book of devotion which breathes a hope for a restoration of the judges of Israel as aforetimes, and our counsellors as at the beginning." You have probably overlooked, that we have altered הַשִּׁיבָה *hashibah*, from שׁוּב, meaning *restore*, and substituted הוֹשִׁיבָה *hashibah*, from שָׁב, signifying *instal, invest*, as it is also translated in our prayer-book: "Let our judges be just as aforetimes, and our counsellors true as in time of yore."

ANSWER BY ISAAC LEESER

We have not on hand the *Israelite* (of Cincinnati) as some of the numbers did not reach us, and the others were not kept with the care which its editors and correspondents, no doubt, think they deserve. Therefore, we are not in a position to say impartially whether the Rev. Solomon Jacobs confuted Mr. Kalisch or not, though we are of the opinion that the latter totally failed in making good his point. But be this as it may, we are perfectly willing to discuss the whole question with Mr. Kalisch on biblical grounds, deeming the Holy Scriptures the whole source of our religious opinions and actions, and not what any writer, be he who he may, may have said. For the present we will only say, that we are surprised that Mr. Kalisch should assert that he does not believe in Messiah Ben David, because the doctrine is not mentioned in the *Pentateuch* and the prophets. Are *all* our doctrines contained in the *Pentateuch solely*? Is there a word of the immortality of the soul, or the spirituality of the same mentioned any where except by inference? We admit that this is a very strong one; but still, where do you find the direct announcement that this is so? Now we maintain, that the *Restoration of Israel to Palestine* as a people, one and entire, is more clearly laid down than reward and punishment after death; for the latter is taught by inference and the former in direct terms. We know not whether Mr. Kalisch's Bible is the same which we have in our possession, or whether he can furnish a comment which nullifies it as he has done so *effectually* in his letter! But without dreading *his* reading being so greatly varying from ours,

we refer him to our version of Deuteronomy, *thirtieth* chapter, where we have these words in verses three and four: "That then the Lord thy God will restore thy captivity, and have mercy upon thee; and he will again gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If thy outcasts be at the outmost parts of heaven, from there will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from there will he fetch thee." This shows, we think, clearly, that the Pentateuch means to predict the future gathering together of Israel. Are we right, Mr. Kalisch, in our interpretation? Does Ramban read it so too? We have not the *Sepher-hageüllah*; but we venture to assert, that no varying comment can gainsay the plain meaning of the words. So we maintain, that the Pentateuch teaches *Kibbutz Galuyoth*, the gathering of all the captivities,—we are so particular, to prevent any misunderstanding, we mean to stick to this as a matter proven. But to show that Moses did not refer to America as the place of the *Geüllah* or redemption, (is this word rightly translated, Mr. Kalisch?) nor to England or Germany, we will, with your leave, patient reader, quote verse five of the same chapter, and beg you to take your own Bible in hand to see whether we deceive you: "And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." Pray, of what land did Moses speak? surely he meant no other than that of which God said to Abraham, (Gen. xiii. 17): "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it." And this was confirmed also to Isaac (ibid. xxvi. 4): "And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves." This was again secured to Jacob (ibid. xxviii. 13, xxxv. 12, which see); so that, to our mind, we think ourself justified in interpreting Moses' prediction in Deuteronomy by the promise to the fathers of Israel in Genesis. Are we justified in doing so? does modern criticism permit us to believe so implicitly in the word of God? We wait for an answer.

"But," says Mr. Kalisch, at least we will do so for him, "the Pentateuch speaks of an event which may be accomplished in any manner, whether with or without BEN DAVID. I admit the prediction, but not the agent." But even this poor subterfuge is not sustained by Scripture; for the *prophets* speak of David by name. We request our readers to refer to their Bibles, and read with devotion and singleness of faith, not fault-finding criticism, the

thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel, especially verse twenty-four:—"And I the Lord—I will be unto them for a God, and my servant DAVID shall be a prince in their midst: I the Lord have spoken it." And this again refers to the preceding verse, where it is said: "And I will appoint over them one shepherd, and he shall feed them, namely, my servant David." Unless words mean nothing, we think that we have proved, beyond contradiction, that Moses foretells a redemption, and Ezekiel, at least, a redeemer, a divinely commissioned chief, whose name should be David, or, as a descendant from David, *the son of David*, MASHIACH BEN DAVID, the anointed descendant from David. (See also Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.)

No one ever asserted any doctrine, except the belief in God, belongs to the six hundred and thirteen precepts; precepts are matters of action, and doctrines the foundation of deeds; wherefore the former can be the subject of a commandment, the latter not,—the exception being an authoritative announcement of the existence of the One God as the basis of all deeds. We express our views in the briefest manner, so as to give Mr. Kalisch at once a full insight in our ideas. By-the-by, his quoting from Ramban does not show at all that this great light in Israel doubted, much less denied, the coming of the Messiah, but only that we should serve God from other motives than material reward,—and this we will maintain against a whole host of critics, and we challenge Mr. Kalisch to bring the smallest particle of evidence to show that Rabbi Mosheh ben Nachman did not believe in restoration of people and temple; in short, in precisely the doctrines laid down by and in our orthodox prayer-book.

For the present we will touch only on one other topic, perhaps foreign to the above. Mr. K. says we overlooked the phraseology of the wretched "Minhag America", and that it is not הַשִּׁיבָה, as in the usual form, *restore*, but הוֹשִׁיבָה, *instal*. We acknowledge that we did not see this falsification of Scripture, and that we could not imagine that the perverters of truth would go so far as to alter the words of prediction which we alone can recite as an object of *promised* hope.—The words which our prayers contain are nearly a transcript from Isaiah (i. 26), only changing God's promise into a petition on our part: "And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning." This is Scriptural doctrine, while that expressed in the "Minhag America" is a perversion of all rules of interpretation and common sense; for where shall our judges be installed if not in our land, and what do *we*

Israelites want with counsellors, if they are to be appointed by the kings and rulers, whether monarchs or people, of the various lands? Is this reasonable or is it folly —We pause for an answer.

We shall be willing to resume the discussion point by point, whenever Mr. Kalisch comes to the task, as we said, with the Bible in his hand. The Messiah not Scriptural? This is indeed saying much. How did the idea get into our prayers, if it were not founded in the very life of Israel?—We confess, we do not understand Mr. Kalisch and his friends.

REJOINDER BY RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH

To the Editor of the Occident:

Guided by the principle *ante omnia veritatem amamus*, I cannot restrain myself from answering your Note in No. 6 of this valuable paper; you have said: "Now we maintain that the restoration of Israel to Palestine as a people, one and entire, is more clearly laid down than reward and punishment after death; for the latter is taught by inference and the former in direct terms."

You have tried to prove your statement in referring to Deut. xxxv. 3-5. But pray sir, where is it said in all the passages which you have adduced in favor of your opinion, that Israel will be restored one and entire?

On the contrary we read in treatise Sanhedrin, 110, that the Tana Rabbi Akiba and others of our greatest ancient authorities ששמן הולך מסוף העולם עד סופו who read and understood the Pentateuch as well as the most learned men of our contemporaries, said and proved by the Pentateuch, "the ten tribes of Israel will never be restored to Palestine."

Is it possible that the idea shall enter your mind, that the world-renowned Rabbi Akiba and others did not understand the Pentateuch, or would have contradicted the

prophecy of Moses? Surely not! You must, therefore, admit that Moses, according to the most ancient expounders of the holy law, has only prophesied a second restoration of a Jewish government in Palestine, but not that all the Israelites will once return to the Holy Land.

Now it is a historical fact, that this prophecy has been literally fulfilled, as it reads Ezra i. 1-5: "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, that he made a proclamation Then rose up . . . and the priests and the Levites with all of them whose spirit God had raised," etc.

Furthermore, it is confessedly evident by Nehemiah i. 8-9, that the passages in Deut. xxx. 3-5 were not understood by him in a Messianic sense, namely, as a prophecy which will be fulfilled in the last days, but as such which will be accomplished in his time. Indeed, you refer the reader to Ezekiel xxxiv. 24, where it reads: "And I will appoint over them one shepherd and he shall feed them, namely, my servant David," and to which you have made the explanatory remark, "that Ezekiel foretells a redeemer, a divinely commissioned chief, whose name would be David, or as a descendant from David, etc.," but this prophecy *has* been fulfilled altogether.

For the "Nassi" of whom Ezekiel speaks is nobody else but Zerubabel, as can be substantiated by the same biblical passage in Jeremiah to which you refer the reader.

The descendant of David, during whose time Israel shall be gathered again and restored once more to Palestine, is signified in Jer. xxxiii. 5 by the name צמח; and by this very name is Zerubabel explicitly called; as in Zechariah

iii, 8: "For behold I will bring my servant Zemmach," and *ibid.* iv: "Behold the man whose name is Zemmach," to which expression Rashi adds, "This is Zerubabel;" hence the prophecy of Jeremiah has already been accomplished. Thus it was also understood by the great Rabbi Samuel, and he therefore said (Sanhedrin 99): אין להם משיח לישראל

"There is no other difference between our times and those of the messianic age, but that all monarchical persecution and power will then cease everywhere."

Ay, I deny emphatically, that God will even send us a Ben David as a king Messiah; because the royal government is mentioned in Deut. xvii. 7, as a heathen institution, and in 1 Sam. viii. 7, it is expressly said, that a desire for a human king shows the ungodliness of the people.

Very correctly Rabbi Hillel remarks, Sanhedrin, 99, אין להם משיח לישראל "Israel has no Messiah," which means that the Israelites should not expect in the Messiah, a visible ruler, or a man commissioned to make the world happy, but as Rashi explains: אלא הקב"ה ימלוך בעצמו ויגאלם לבדו "For the Holy One, blessed be His name, will govern supremely, and alone redeem them." Regarding the "Minhag America" you ask: "where shall our judges be installed, if not in our land?" etc. To this I answer, that our land is now the State in which we live, and where we enjoy a free constitution, religious and civil liberty, and where we can preach and promulgate the truisms of our holy religion without any restraints.

We pray according to our "Minhag America", that God may support us to instal a just and a righteous President, true counsellors, and good and faithful officers. Or do you

think, that appointing the officers by the people is not by the will of God?

Have you forgotten that Deut. xvi. 18 reads: "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates", and nevertheless the prophet Isaiah said: "I (thy God) will restore thy judges as aforesaid," etc.

You see now that the prophet thought קול המון עם כקול שרי "*vox populi vox dei*." This explanation, I hope, will suffice at present.

ANSWER BY ISAAC LEESER

We were in hopes that Mr. Isidor Kalisch would have confessed his error, and joined again the ancient standard of Israel. But it appears that he insists on justifying his unbelief, and giving pretended quotations in his support. To reply, therefore, is our duty, as we have been in a measure compelled to take up the defence on behalf of orthodoxy, and we hope, therefore, that our readers will give us their candid attention and weigh carefully what we advance in support of the ancient ideas of Israel. But to begin without farther apology. Mr. Kalisch first excepts to our saying that the thirtieth of Deuteronomy teaches a restoration one and entire. To this he opposes a *dictum* of Rabbi Akiba in Sanhedrin, x., 3 (Gemara fol. 110), and to fortify his objection he says Rabbi Akiba *and others*. But it appears from an inspection of the passage, that Mr. K. has made a slight mistake; he will himself know better than we do whether it was with design or accidentally. The words as we can render them are: "The ten tribes will in future not return; for it is written, 'He cast them out into another land, as it is this day'; meaning, as this day passes away and returns not, so did they go away, and will not return; these are the words of Rabbi Akiba; Rabbi Elazar said, 'Like this day,' as the day becomes dark and next day it is light again, so is it with them, their darkness over them, will in future become light over them.' In comment to this, Rabbi Simeon son of Judah of Kefar Akko said in the name of Rabbi Simeon, If their deeds are like they are this day, they will not return, but if otherwise, they will return. Rabbi (Judah) said they will return at the future, for it is said, On that day shall the great cornet be blown, and they shall come who are lost in the land of Assyria, and outcast in the

land of Egypt." It would thus appear that four teachers, Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Simeon ben Judah, Rabbi Simeon and Rabbi Judah controverted Rabbi Akiba's assumption, while even the latter did not say a word against the expected return of the Israelites known in his day, among whom were large numbers belonging to the ten tribes, since many either not having left the country at all, or having been brought back as the legend says according to Jeremiah, were incorporated with the kingdom of Judah or David, to which circumstances it is owing that all Israelites now are included under the name of Jews, a term which by rights only implies those belonging to Judah, Hebrew *Yehudim* contracted into the term so little euphonic, Jews. Suppose it were admitted even that not one of the lost tribes should ever come again to Palestine, this would not controvert the fact of a restoration of Israel one and entire as the people has existed for thousands of years being promised in the Law revealed through Moses. Our space this week is too much cramped to reply more to Mr. K.; but we shall pay him our respects before long.

REJOINDER BY RABBI ISIDOR KALISCH

Having read your articles on the Messiah with close attention, I must again take up the pen, in order to show that not a particle of my arguments for not believing in the coming of a personal Messiah has been weakened or shaken by all your elaborate endeavors.

Avoiding your rhetorical strain, I will do it in the briefest manner. The clear truth does not need any embellishment, and despises such little resources to gain the applause of the reader.

It speaks most effectually by its own incomparable, all-convincing beauty.

Nay, it is sinful against God and truth to use any expression in the course of our earnest discussion, in order to kindle the flame of fancy and passion, or to call such who differ with us in religious opinion by odious names; because

this would serve to nothing else but to set on fire the unreasonable zeal of the unlettered against the innocent searcher after truth.

I remind you, therefore, publicly: "Righteousness and nothing but righteousness pursue," and discuss with me the point at issue in a dignified, scientific manner.

And now to the subject.

You like to honor my denial of a personal Messiah with the following epithets: "a criminal unbelief," "heresy," etc.; but tell me, Mr. Leeser, by which authority can you prove that my system deserves such hateful names?

Did Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, whom you consider as a good orthodox Jew, express himself in the same way as you do?

Although this Rabbi has been a thorough royalist, and cherished the hope of a third restoration of an Israelitish kingdom by a Ben David, admits, nevertheless, explicitly, as I have already mentioned in a former article,¹ that the denial of such a hope has no injurious influence whatever into the very essence of the holy Law.

From this it follows confessedly, that the Ramban understood the passage in Deuteronomy in the same sense as I do, namely, that this prophecy contains nothing regarding the belief in the coming of a Ben David as a king Messiah. —It is very probable that he was induced to this statement by the opinion of the Rabbi Akiba, who said: "The ten tribes will never return to Palestine," and consequently it has not been foretold in Deuteronomy, that the Israelites

¹ אם נסכים בלבנו וכו' ושיאריך ה' עלינו הגלות לאין סוף וכו' כל זה לא יזיק בעקר התורה מאומה (ספר שנאוּלה לרמב"ן סוף פרק ב')

will return after their dispersion as a people one and entire, but only that a second restoration of a Jewish government will take place, which has been already fulfilled during the time of the second temple. You have certainly objected, that four teachers, Rabbi Eleazar, Rabbi Simon, and Rabbi Jehudah, controverted Rabbi Akiba's assumption.

Sir, allow me to say, that you are very much mistaken, because the subject of discussion in the Mishnah and Beraitha is very different.

In the Mishnah is spoken of the deplorable fate of the ten tribes in this world, as it reads also in *בחקת' פ' כהנים* "And you shall be lost among the gentiles." "Under this expression," said Rabbi Akiba, "are meant the ten tribes".

The Beraitha, however, dwells on the topic whether and when the ten tribes are worthy to enjoy the happiness in a future world, which is signified by the term *עולם הבא*.

Hence, not four Rabbins or scholars, but only one Rabbi, namely, Rabbi Eleazer, alone contradicted Rabbi Akiba.

Now, every man, who is but a little versed in the Rabbinical literature, knows it, that it is a settled rule (see *Seder Tanaim*, 10) *הלכה כר"ע מחברו*. When Rabbi Akiba differs in some point with his colleagues, we shall always decide according to the opinion of Rabbi Akiba.

Furthermore, Siphri, Behaloscha reads,—“Hail thee, our patriarch Abraham, that Akiba descends from thy loins. Tryphon has seen the subject at issue, and has forgotten it, and Akiba taught it by inference, and it corresponds exactly to the Halacha. Indeed! Everybody leaving you, is

as separating himself from his own life." (Compare also "Kidushin," 66b.)

Again, you have objected, that the exposition of the passage in Deut. xxix. 27, as it is given by Rabbi Akiba, is called a "Derash," and not a "Halachah," which all Israel is bound to accept, as, in fact, it was not accepted. To this I must remark, that as you can only support your belief in the coming of a personal Messiah by some Derashot of some Rabbis, I have the same right to refute such by other Derashot of other Rabbinical authorities. But nay! I maintain, that the Derasha of Rabbi Akiba, the father of the traditional oral law, has been considered as Halachah. And here is a proof for my statement.

Yebamot, 16b, reads: "If a gentile, namely, a Kuti, makes, in our times, a marriage vow to a Jewess, it is binding, on account of being perhaps a descendant of the ten tribes," etc. This shows clearly that the opinion of Rabbi Akiba, that the main body of the ten tribes has been entirely incorporated with the idolaters, was considered as a Halachah. The opinion of Rabbi Akiba, however, can be proved by the reports of two reliable historians.

1 Chron. v, 26 reads: "And he carried them away," etc., "and brought them unto Chalach, Chabor," etc., "unto this day." If Ezra, the author of Chronicles, writes in regard to the exiled Israelites "unto this day," it is a satisfactory evidence that the main body did not return. (See the "History of Josephus," v. b. 11.)

But besides this, it is an historical fact, that Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Eleazer lived at the time when the Holy Land

was laid waste by the Romans, and that they have been acquainted with local matters.

Now, if they controverted whether the ten tribes will return to Palestine or not, it is evident, that the ten tribes did not return. Again, you object, "The legends of treatise Makkoth show that Rabbi Akiba spoke of the non fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy during the course of the second temple, and therefore looked forward," etc., to a **בית שלישי**

These legends are also related in "Siphri Ekev." But tell me, Mr. Leeser, where is it mentioned, with one syllable, that Rabbi Akiba taught we shall or must believe in the coming of a Ben David as a king Messiah?

These legends give us only the moral lesson, that God will reward the Israelites for all the sacrifices they have made in behalf of their religion, and for all the struggles they have fought for truth and righteousness in future days **לעחד לבוא**, which is also signified by the term **עולם הבא**, the future world.

Thus it reads in "Siphri": "In the end of time will be fulfilled the words of the prophet Zechariah." *Id est*, as it is expounded in treaties Pesachim, 68a. Death will cease altogether, and the world will be changed to a spiritual one. All other prophecies regarding the prosperity of the Jewish government have been fulfilled during the second temple, as it has been foretold by Hag. ii. 9. "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than that of the former, says the Lord of Hosts."—History proves that this has been literally accomplished. The kings of Media and Persia, the sovereigns of Egypt, Alexander the Great, and the noblemen of all the civilized nations, at that time sent their

offerings and most valuable presents to the temple at Jerusalem, in order to adore and glorify the God of Israel. It is true that Rabbi Akiba had the favorite idea to expect a Ben David as a king Messiah before the time of Bar Kochba, but he gave it up afterwards as unfounded in Scripture, and spoke only about עולם הבא (the future world), and nothing at all about a personal Messiah.

On the contrary, we read in "Midrash Rabba. Schoftim": "I will set a king over me." To this expression the Rabbis remark: "God said, 'You have desired in this world to be ruled by kings, and these very kings have slain you with the sword.' Saul has done it on the Mount of Gilboa. David occasioned a pestilence. Ahab was the cause that it has been no rain a very long time. Zedekiah was the cause that the temple was destroyed. As they perceived all, what they had undergone during the time of their kings, they now unanimously exclaim: 'We do not want any human king, for only God is our judge, God is our law-giver, God alone is our king.' (Zech. xxxiii. 23.) And God will reply to them: 'I swear it by your life, thus I will do.' As it reads Zech. xxiv. 9: 'And then will God be the king over the whole earth,' " etc. No human king, no Ben David as a king Messiah, shall be expected from us in future days, but the great event that God will universally be acknowledged as the Lord of the whole universe.

DEMONS AND EVIL SPIRITS, ACCORDING TO JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY *

The doctrine of the evil spirits taught by the heathen has a double source. Either it was originated by the idea of the Egyptians, that there is a destructive power in nature being represented by Typhon, or by the dualistic system of Zoroaster, who taught, that there are two deities, namely: Ormuzd, the author of all good, and Ahriman, the author of all evil. (See Kreuzer's "Mythology" I, page 317, etc.) In the old biblical Scriptures, however, there is not a shadow of all these notions to be found.

Nay, it is rather taught on the contrary, that there is not in existence any evil principle or deity, prince of darkness, genius of evil or Satanic power.

I will now endeavor to prove my statement in a double way:

1. I will show, that the Jewish Bible contains passages from which every reasonable thinker must draw the inference, that a devil, with his kingdom of evil spirits, does not exist.

2. I will further show that there are also expressions, teaching explicitly, that evil spirits are merely fantastic creations of the brain.

THE PENTATEUCH

I. Exodus xx, 5 reads: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the

* Reprinted from the "Israelite," V, Nos. 41, 42, vi, 20.

children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me," etc. Here is evidently said, that it is exclusively the omnipotent hand of God which rewards or punishes, giving fortune or misfortune, sorrow or happiness.

Again, *Ibid.* ii, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is," etc.

The whole universe, together with all its powers, are represented as "creatio primitiva," a primitive creation and action of God, the sole primitive force. This alone shall be worshipped and adored; because this alone governs every thing.

Ibid. xxiii, 25, 26: "And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless your food and your beverage, and I will take sickness away from the midst of you. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in thy land. The number of thy days I will fulfil." To the influence of God alone it is here ascribed temporal wealth as well as also the removing of sickness, pestilence and epidemical diseases.

Furthermore, *Ibid.* xv, 26: "I will put none of these diseases upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord thy physician." (See also Deut. vii, 12 to 15.) Again, Deut. xxxii, 39: "See now, that I, I alone am he, and there is no God with me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; neither is there any, that can deliver out of my hand."

It is here expressly said, that no kind of sickness nor death or life can be engendered except by the will of God

alone, and that no one exists who is able to alter this divine will.

II. Deut. xxxii, 17, reads: "They sacrificed unto devils, being no divine power," *id est*, that are nothing, as they are signified, *Ibid.* 21, by the word "הבלים" "varitates," "vain chimeras" or as the idols of the heathen are generally called, for instance, Lev. xix, 14, אלילים nullities.

Some theologians maintain that the word, עזאזל, Lev. xvi, 8, 10, 26, means an evil spirit or the devil; but this is false, as I will show beyond all doubt by the following arguments:

1. Lev. xvii, 7, reads: "And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, etc. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations," consequently a sacrifice which should be offered to an evil spirit in the desert would be contradictory not only to the mentioned law, but also to the general religious principles of Mosaism which repeatedly enjoins, that God alone shall be adored and worshipped.

2. The definition of the word "Azazel," "an evil spirit," is without any grammatical foundation.

The word "Azazel" signifies either as the Septuagint rendered the same, namely: "apopompaioi," "transportation," or as others maintain, that it is the name of the place in the desert, where the scape-goat was sent to. (See Kalisch's "Guide," p. 128.)

If Philippon objects in his commentary on the Pentateuch against the later explanation, that a place bearing such or a similar name is not known, he has probably overlooked a passage in I Saml. xx, 19, where occurs the

expression **אֵבֶן הַזֹּחֶל**. The Talmud describes the place, where the scape-goat was sent to as having been a rock (see Rosh Hashanah, 31, and Yoma, 67,) and that this rock was called Azazel.

Having shown by arguments, that Moses taught there is no evil power or devil in existence, I will further prove, that the prophets, who followed him enjoined the same doctrine.

The prophet Samuel said (I Saml. xii, 20 and 21): “. . . but serve the Lord with all your heart. And turn you not aside, for then should you go after vain things which can not profit nor deliver; for they are vain.”

Isaiah said, xlv, 8; “Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no divine power: I know not any.” And *Ibid.* xlv, 6 and 7: “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things.”

The prophet Jeremiah, admonishing the Israelites not to contract the vicious habits of the Babylonians and not to embrace their worship, said, chapter x, 3: “For the religious customs of the people are vain,” etc., and *Ibid.* 15 and 16: “They are vanity and the work of errors, etc. The position of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things,” etc. Furthermore, Lam. iii, 37: “Who is he, that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?” etc. Compare also Prov. xx, 24 and xxiv, 12. It is true, that we find sometimes in the holy Scriptures the expression **רוּחַ רָעָה**; but in order to get a true meaning of it, I will en-

deavor to show what the ancient Hebrews meant, when they have spoken of a "Ruach."

It signifies 1, soul (Num. xvi, 22,); 2, the talents and skilfulness (Ex. xxviii, 3, etc.,); 3, the disposition and emotions of the heart, (Gen. xxvi, 25, Ex. vi, 9, etc.; Ps. li, 12.) The expression רוח רעה occurring in Jud. ix, 23, means, consequently, not an evil spirit, as it is rendered in the common version, but an evil mind, dissatisfaction which took place between the king Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem.

And, beside the usage of the language, there is a very rational ground, that רוח רעה can not mean here an evil spirit; because it is inconceivable, that a spirit of God, who is sent to inflict a punishment upon a cruel murderer of his numerous brothers and upon the ungrateful and wicked citizens of Shechem, should be called an evil spirit.—It is, therefore, very correctly translated in the Latin Version: *"Immisit autem Deus affectum malum."*

But just as little can be rendered I Saml. xvi, 15, רוח אלהים רעה "an evil spirit from God;" because were Saul and his contemporaries believing, that he was possessed by a demon, they had surely not tried to cure an evil of such a nature by the means of musical sports, and would rather have consulted a conjurer, and requested him to exorcise the evil spirit, just as Saul has taken refuge in his desperate political circumstances to a woman, whom he supposed to be a sorceress.

As they used, however, natural remedies which were also crowned with success, it is evident, that they ascribed to Saul's sickness only natural causes. Therefore רוח אלהים רעה

means nothing else than an invincible evil mind or human melancholy.

The passage I Kings xxii, 21: "And there came forth a spirit," etc., is by no means a proof, that the notion of the existence of a Satan had been already prevailing among the Jews at the time of the King Ahab; for there is not spoken of an evil spirit but of a serving angel commissioned by the Lord to execute his decree of punishment, and especially as the diction of the whole narrative shows, it has not been a real fact but a metaphor used by the prophet in his vision.

Again, ancient and modern commentators adduce the words of Is. xiii, 21, and xxxiv, 14, as proofs for the belief in the existence of evil spirits, and even the learned and renowned Gesenius maintains, that שְׁעִירִים occurring in the quoted passages and elsewhere, mean beings similar to the Satyrs of the Greeks. This is, however, incorrect; because it follows clearly from a passage in Lev. xvii, 7, and unequivocally from II Chronicles xi, 15, that the word שְׁעִירִים signifies "strange gods that are feared" "Idols" derived from the verb שָׁעַר "fear" Deut. xxxii, 17. Since now the heathen divinities are represented as chimeras by Isaiah himself, it is impossible, that he meant under שְׁעִירִים, beings like the Satyrs.

The words שְׁעִירִים, צִיִּים, לִילִית, are only different names for wild, terrible beasts living in the desert, as the prophet mentions a great many more kinds of wild beasts in the same passages.

Furthermore, the expression, מִלֹּאכֵי רָעִים, occurring in Psalm lxxviii, 49, does not mean evil spirits but the plagues which the poet mentions before, calling them allegorically

"Disastrous angels." That the natural powers executing the divine sentence are called angels of God is expressly said, Psalm civ, 4, where it reads: "Who makes the winds his angels, his ministers a flaming fire."—Thus it is rendered in the Latin version: "*Qui facit angelos suos rentos,*" etc. Or *Ibid.* ciii, 19 and 20: "The Lord has settled his throne in the heavens and his dominion ruleth over all. Praise the Lord, you his angels, heroic powers that do his commandments in order to hearken unto the voice of his word." Even the word Satan occurring in Psalm cix 6, where it reads: "Let show a wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand," does not mean an evil spirit or devil seducing man to wickedness; but signifies a human adversary, an enemy and persecution, as it is undoubtedly proved by the contents of the verse 29, (*Ibid.*)

The word שטן (Satan) frequently signifies an evil effect, for instance, Num. xx, 11, 32, etc. "And the angels of the Lord said: הנה יצאתי לשתן, Behold I went out to withstand thee."

Again I Kings v, 4, אין שטן ואין פגע רע there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. See also I Samuel xxix, 4; I Kings xi, 14, 23 and 25.

The word שטן in Zech. iii, 1, signifies allegorically Sanbalat and his consort, who tried to prevent the building of the temple at Jerusalem.

Thus I Ch. xxi, 1, used the word שטן instead of אף ה' as it is expressed, II Sam. xxiv, 1.

And in fine the Satan as represented in the metaphorical prologue of the book of Job is by no means a devil or an evil spirit that beguiles man to sin, but is an angel who

causes the divine temptations of man as far as he is permitted by God to do so. We see now, that in the Jewish Holy Scriptures, that is, in the literature from Moses until Ezra and Nehemiah, there is not a shadow of the doctrine of evil spirits or demons to be found.

Ay, on the contrary this pernicious, superstitious doctrine, as I shall prove hereafter, is explicitly rejected and condemned as the greatest blasphemy and as foolish notions unbecoming man.

I shall endeavor to show clearly how and at what time demonology, although anti-Mosaic, crept, nevertheless, into Judaism, and whether all the Jews paid homage to its strange and fantastical ideas.

The first time we meet with traces of demonology is in the apocryphal book, namely, in the Wisdom of Solomon, II, 24, where it reads: "Nevertheless by envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it."

Again, Tobit III, 8: "Because she had been married to seven husbands consecutively, when Ashmodeus, the evil spirit had killed them." See also *Ibid.* IV, 17 and 20.

The definition of the word "Ashmodeus" occurring in the last passage is differently given by theologians in this country as well as in Europe: but all their explanations belong to the province of hypothesis and are wanting in linguistical proof.

I hope to be the Oedipus of this mysterious enigma, and I will try to explain it etymologically.

The word אשמודאי is a Chaldaic noun, the root of which is שמדע, and means

1. To know, to recognize.

2. To estrange.

It is found in the following way: In forming a Chaldaic noun an $\aleph$ is usually prefixed to the root and η is added afterward, if it signifies any person.

The γ is omitted, as is done very often to shorten the word. See the commentary of Ramban to Ex. xii, 43.

Hence is אֲשֵׁמְרָא analogous to the Hebrew word זָר "the stranger," "the enemy," "the barbarian," and is like the Greek "Xeinos," or the Latin "Hostis."

Besides this Chaldaic name of an evil spirit several others are mentioned in the Treatises Sanhedrin, 101 and Sabbath 67.

Again, we find in the Talmud names of the evil spirits which are partly borrowed from Parsism, (the religion of Zoroaster,) partly from the Greek. For instance, Baba Bathra, 73, $\text{הוֹרְמִין בֶּר לִילִית}$, "Ahriman the son of darkness," which is the Persian name of the prince of darkness. Pesachim 118, $\text{יֹרְקְמִי שֶׁר הַבֵּרֶד}$, *Jerkomos*, (in Greek an officer of the temple,) "demon of the hail."

Furthermore, occurs Megillah 17, the word תַּמְלִיין , *The-melion*, which means in Greek the rudiments of the Christian religion. (See Corinth. xii, 3; Romans xv, 20; Hebrews vi, 1.)

By such an expression an evil spirit is called said to have gone into a Roman princess, and cast out of her by Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai.

How largely the influence of the Grecian views prevailed with the Jews can be inferred from the fact, that they called even the highest angel by a Grecian name. *Metatron*,

מטטרון, (Sanhedrin, 15,) which word is composed of *meta* and *thronos*, meaning, "Who is near to the throne."

I must not omit now to remark, that the explanation of this word given by Dr. Jellinek, namely that מטטרון is analogous to the Grecian word *mithra*, (signifying in the Persian language master,) is too artificial a derivation and can not be well supported on linguistic grounds.

Another proof of my statement, that Grecian opinions had a great influence on Judaism is, that we find in Bera-choth, 6, a similar assertion to that of Hesiod, that there are three thousand demons hovering in the air. The Talmud reads: "If the eye could see all the demons hovering in the air nobody would venture to stand up." Even so are Platonic opinions expressed in Sanhedrin, 16: "The demons are moving upon the whole world and pry into the secrets of the future."

The most prominent Pharisees and learned Jews contradicted these pernicious doctrines and declaimed with great warmth and energy against them. They said: "Any one who uses an adjuration pretending to heal any disease has no share in the future world."

Again, it reads Sanhedrin, 101: "You shall never meddle yourselves with operations in supposed demoniac matter."

Furthermore, *Ibid.* 67b: "It reads in the Bible: There is no power besides God. This passage is illustrated by Rabbi Chanina, that there is no spirit, demon or any kind of sorcery, that could do any good or harm to anybody."

Nay, it is positively maintained that there is no Satan in existence, but the Satan is the bad propensity in men.

Again, the Midrash Rabbah, Exodus xv, 6, says: "The

divine administration of justice differs very much from the human court. It is usual in the latter for two men to appear, one of whom is the accuser and the other the defendant. God does not act, however, in this way. He is at once the accuser and defender."

Thus we are informed by Philo, that the Alexandrian Jews rejected the doctrine of a diabolic empire. He said Gigant 286: If we consider spirits, demons and angels as one and the same subject, we put down the most burdensome load, namely: superstition.

The Asiatic, Egyptian and Grecian heathenisms have been the cradle of demonology with all those pernicious delusions, which have been the scourge of humanity.

Although the most learned Jews as I have stated above, have considered it idolatry and combated with strenuous opposition to remove it, Jesus and his disciples used the superstitions prevailing among the people everywhere to gain glory and reputation. This remains an everlasting foul spot on the character of the author of Christendom and a disgrace to the New Testament. Dr. Bretschneider, a renowned Christian theologian, has probably perceived this, and he said very ingenuously in his *Dogmatic I b. p. 608*: "The controversies of the theologians on the existence and effects of the devil shall not be brought before the public at large, and neither shall any one try to explain away the devil of the New Testament, because it would hurt in some way the authority of the New Testament."

And indeed every attentive reader of the old Holy Scriptures and the New Testament comprehends, that the Mosaism has a great many preferences above Christianity,

as I have incontestably shown in my book entitled "Guide for Rational Inquiries," and also this great advantage, that it eradicates demonology and all diabolic mysteries, the root of superstition.

The Mosaic religion must therefore be acknowledged by the greatest philosophers to be the only one which has a claim to the honorable title of a religion founded on reason.

THE SOURCE OF ALL CIVILIZATION *

"It is the end and aim of the present to submit everything to the inspection of the idea supplied us by reason only."—FICHTE.

A survey of the history of nations shows to every clear-sighted searcher after truth that mankind is generally progressing to a better state as to physical, moral and intellectual improvement.

Although generations are constantly coming and disappearing, we observe, nevertheless, that all the seeds of culture and enlightenment which have been planted by our forebears from age to age through all mutations of time, clime and place, have not been lost, but have ripened to charming blossoms and yield finally delicious fruits.

As the stars rise and set in the firmament, and even the remotest and smallest one does not appear there in vain, but is shedding its mild and twinkling light, just so is the smallest intellectual power never lost, but has been, and is, irradiating the whole human race by its salutary beams,

* Lecture delivered before the Young Men's Literary and Social Union of Indianapolis, Indiana. First printed in 1864. The lecture was dedicated to the aforementioned organization in the following terms:

Accept the best I know and the best I can give you. Endeavor to hasten the time when there shall be a dominion of reason engendering a just and powerful new public life in the minds and actions of our nation.

until the sun of knowledge will rise and shine in full glory to the later generations.

Men make not only gigantic progress in arts and sciences, but also in morals, and therefore become generally better, more civilized and judicious.

Prejudice, superstition, fanaticism, intolerance and mania of persecution vanish daily more and more, and nearly everywhere speak the laws loudly and energetically of equality, of the civil rights of all men, of people's sovereignty, and antiquated political principles are changed, altered or abolished by degrees according to the spirit of the times.

Slavery and vassalage have not only been abolished nearly everywhere in civilized Europe, but also in our beloved Union, the model of all republics, they are torn up by the roots by a majority of the people with unprecedented vigor and sacrifices.

We ask now who and what was it that produced such a high state of human culture in the United States? Who and what is it, that is yet unremittingly promoting the same? Was and is it the Republican Party, by laborious exertions and continued efforts of its great statesmen and distinguished orators? Yes. What then is the source of civilization generally?

To these questions we receive a double answer. Some maintain that it is practical philosophy, namely:

1. The common ethics as exemplified by the doctrines of the value, end and aim of human actions generally;
2. Moral philosophy (precepts of virtue and manners)

by the application of the common ethics to the internal spiritual life of man; and

3. Politics, as the application of the common ethics to the external social relations, as well as the theoretical philosophy, namely:

a. The common metaphysics of manners or the common doctrine of the duties of man;

b. The metaphysical doctrines of virtue; and

c. The metaphysical politics or jurisprudence being the sinew of life of all improvements, and ennobling of the nations; while others assert that Christianity is the main-spring of all civilization of mankind.

In regard to the public and secret human evils and crimes, civil and personal miseries, infirmities and failings, and especially all the hinderances of beneficial progress and improvement of culture, there is a conflicting opinion between the panegyrists of Christianity and the admirers and retainers of philosophy. One party is laying them to the charge of the other and treat its subject disdainfully and contemptuously, nay, very often also with violent passion, and both refer us to historical facts. The Christian theologians, the reverend preachers, decry philosophy, or human wisdom, as they please to term it, in their works as well as from their pulpits, and proclaim to all the world that it is the source where all the errors and faults came from and are still coming, by which the community is and has been always deluged everywhere. No frivolity or indiscretion can be imagined which has not been represented once by a philosopher.

Philosophy is, as the French thinker Bayle admitted,

an escharotic powder, consuming the putrid flesh as long as there is any of it, but afterwards it corrodes sound flesh, marrow and bones.

The philosophers maintain, on the contrary, that as long as there are positive religions we hear of fanatics, wonders, wars, impostors and deceived people.

It is true that there are also penitents, visionaries and hypocrites in China and Turkey as well as in Europe and America; but there is no religion in existence upon the whole face of the earth where such a spirit of intolerance is prevailing as in that religion confessed and taught by Christian priests.

Early in the first centuries when the Christians had risen to dominion and power, they refused the Jews and heathens all kinds of human feelings with an unparalleled hard-heartedness and a shocking ferocity and did not grant them justice or toleration.

The severity of the rage of persecution of the Christian Emperors, Lords and Bishops grew fiercer from year to year and from century to century.

In all the cities of the great Roman Empire the heathen temples were closed by force, and all the public property of the heathen was confiscated in order to enrich the Christian churches.

They stoned, murdered and plundered a great many non-Christians, and thought to serve God by this crying sin.

They did not teach, dispute and fight with words and expressions, but with autos-da-fé poniards, tortures and dungeons.

A religion that produced such effects, a religion which

excited so much hatred and intolerance, and stimulated bloody persecutions against all persons entertaining different opinions or which authorized to rob and plunder property belonging to others has surely not contributed to promote civilization and culture, but to a very great demoralization.

And indeed since Christianity has been an established religion in the Roman Empire, all the beautiful and bright virtues of antiquity, by which it has been victorious in three continents, became weaker and weaker and expired finally altogether, and degeneracy and immorality were coming on originated by very obliging priests of the alone-saving faith who had always had in store heavenly remissions of Christian sins and vices and a purification from Christian guilt.

If we study history, says the philosopher, with an unbiassed mind, and lay aside the Christian spectacles to see the ancient facts, we must confess that Rome, once crowned with glory and the ruler of the earth, fell dangerously sick during the time of several Christian emperors and died finally of the effects of Christianity. They endeavored to establish Christendom by force and by the edge of the sword.

Yes, the spirit of Christian intolerance has been growing in such a degree that it engendered even among the different Christian sects the most formidable religious wars with all heinous crimes.

From 772 to 803 the emperor Charles the Great persecuted the Saxons furiously.

He drove them by thousands into the rivers in order to be baptized.

Four thousand five hundred prisoners refusing to become Christians, he ordered to be slaughtered at once, and forced their commander, Wittekind, to be baptized and to embrace Christianity.

In the 11th century all the Christians who were considered as heretics were burnt alive as Manichees, and a great many Jews were either converted by force or cruelly murdered.

In the 12th century Count Emich, of Leiningen, and Arch-Bishop Ruthard, of Mainz, committed horrible massacres among the Jews on the Rhine; because some Monks pretended to have found upon the grave of Jesus a letter from heaven in which the conversion of Jews was demanded in definite terms.

In the 13th century Pope Innocent III and Pope Gregory IX founded the formidable Inquisition, the court of condemnation of intellectual freedom, and the Franciscans, Dominicans, the hounds of the Lord, or Jacobins and the Carmelites became the terror of the free thinking Christians and of the Jews. The great German poet, Haller, remarks with a just indignation:

"Cruel tyrant, cursed rage of fanatics,
Glowing always wild against heretics,
Thou didst not rise out of Cerberus foam
Which vents in hell's solitary gloom,
No! Thou art born of the sainted breast,
And thy parent is priest's boiling chest.
Speaking but of love with pious care,
And yet showing fury everywhere.
Ere a Pope a sovereign became

And a man assumed God's holy name,
 All who did not go the priesthood's path,
 Were made victims of their fiendish wrath.
 Who had drowned with blood the ground of Toulouse?"

The poet alludes here to the atrocious actions of the Inquisition established at Toulouse in 1229, which ordered all heretics to be buried alive.

In 1484 an Inquisition was introduced in Spain which, up to the year 1808, offered up to God 343,000 innocent human creatures as sacrifices, by which this pretended pious institution tortured and murdered the bravest men.

And besides these cruelties generally committed, how shocking was the fatal destiny of millions of poor Jews in the Christian empires!

A lamb among seventy wolves, as Jewish bards bitterly lament in their elegies.

The Jews, who have been commanded in the Pentateuch (Lev. xix, 34), to love the stranger like themselves, without any distinction of nation or creed, and have never flinched from their duty; the Jews who watched with scrupulous care and anxiety over the most holy human records, and their only crime was the belief in a primitive cause, namely, in one God, were hated, despised, plundered and murdered cruelly everywhere.

Instead of pitying such a noble people, which were spread over the whole world, and having compassion on them, supporting the weak and protecting them against violence, robbery and spoliation, they preferred to treat them with inhuman and unjust severity, and to oppress them with heavy, exorbitant taxes.

The only relief they offered them was either to take the cross or to die shamefully.

And, indeed, there has been no public or natural calamity which has not been attributed to the unfortunate Jews.

Thus, for instance, maintained the Pope in 1569, that on account of the Jews an earthquake happened in Ferarra in Italy, although the Duke well remarked, that he can hardly believe it; because twelve Churches fell into ruins at that time, and not one Synagogue.

I could speak volumes on this subject, how the Jews have been wilfully misrepresented, nicknamed and disgraced by the clergy, to disseminate and to nourish a hatred against them among their Christian brethren, and to raise persecution against this unhappy but meritorious and innocent people. I will, however, says the philosopher, restrict myself to the only fact how Christians have treated their own brethren in faith.

In 1572 thirty thousand Protestants, or Huguenots, so called as a nickname, because they were only allowed to hold Divine services at night, like a certain specter Hugo, were cruelly massacred in all the provinces of France, and this action was considered as a work of Christian piety.

This terrible slaughter lasted thirty days. It is generally known as the St. Bartholomew Massacre, for which the Pope, the Holy Father of the Catholics, proclaimed a year of jubilee.

In 1618-48 raged, in the name of Christianity, the Thirty Years' War, and a fiendish carnage was committed in a great many empires. And if we look into the history of

England we find that even there a great many human sacrifices were offered on the altar of Christianity.

There were either the Catholics or the Roundheads, or the Presbyterians or Puritans, etc., etc., who, as soon as they had the power, persecuted cruelly all who differed with them in religious opinions, treated them with severity and suppressed them.

Should or can all this be called Christian civilization?

Yes, when the pious Spanish Christians came as strangers hither to America, they murdered countless numbers of men, women and children, who had not given them any offence or harm, drove away the others, and took in possession their land, houses, and all their property.

Indeed! not humanity, enlightenment, culture and administration of justice, but blind fanaticism followed everywhere the footsteps of Christianity.

It is impossible, says the philosopher, that Christianity can or could ever favor the progress of mankind; because it teaches explicitly, as the reverend theologians maintain, that reason is a weak, blind, corrupted and seducing leader, and that we shall take our understanding into custody of the faith, as it reads in the 1st Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians x, 5: "Casting down imagination, etc., and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Hence Christianity teaches, that we shall not inquire about the most important human affairs reasonably, but shall behave without any investigation.

It enjoins a passive credulity and puts reason to sleep.

Nay! it banishes the spirit out of the province of reality

and puts shackles upon good sense, the only guides men possess to reach a higher perfection.

It is like a circle which can never progress.

It extinguishes the sun in the empire of ideas, and therefore it has been and is only the author of spiritual night.

Now it is a decided fact that our religious, political and literary horizon is enlarging more and more, and that our views, experience and knowledge have greatly increased, and grow still to an extent which the illustrious age of the Greeks and Romans could not imagine.

The question is obtruding therefore upon the mind of every close observer of humanity—Who and what has effected this gigantic progress?

A great many would certainly exclaim, it is Christianity that produced this progressive state of human affairs, whatever the philosophers may gainsay it; because only in such empires, where the majority of the citizens are Christians, civilization and culture are going onward and upward.

But here I have to remark that it is an erroneous conclusion: *hoc propter hoc*, namely, if we infer from the accidental coinciding of two events that one is the cause of the other.

I will illustrate and prove this now by the following example: Suppose it is raining and my table is standing near the window, and I would draw a conclusion; as my table is standing near the window, therefore it is raining out of doors to-day.

Every reasonable man would admit that this is a false inference, because the two appearances depend on different causes and are not connected at all.

It is just the same case with Christianity and civilization.

Both met accidentally; but the origin, growth and blossom of civilization we do not owe to Christianity, but to other causes.

To convince ourselves of this fact, we shall endeavor to observe closely the course which civilization has taken since the remotest time until now.

If we gaze upon the colossal ruins which we find in Thebes in Egypt, that have been destroyed 4,000 years ago, we must make the conclusion that civilization was highly advanced in Egypt at that time.

For we perceive that the use of sculpture, of the art of printing, of the fine enamel works, of glass and precious metals which have been made there by the Egyptians, was in such a degree of perfection that it is proved beyond doubt art and science had then attained a remarkable development.

And so it is reported in the ancient literature, that thousands of years ago, before Christianity was thought of, astronomy, physics, hydraulics, chemistry and mathematics flourished in Egypt, and the philosophers studied everything that was useful, considering the study of man and nature as the highest prosperity.

We find, furthermore, in the records of the past, that people flocked hither from all quarters in order to be instructed in Egyptian schools.

Thus Herodotus, the father of history, tells us that the Greeks borrowed a great portion of their arts and sciences from the Egyptians. Under the expression Egyptians, how-

ever, is not only meant the heathen, but is also included the Egyptian Jews.

Although a great many are inclined to consider nowadays the Jewish monuments of knowledge as obsolete, others as containing dangerous errors, shaking the prevailing establishments in the empire of reason to their very foundations, and finally others as self-complacent pride, they are nevertheless such productions which the great philosophers Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle considered as the most precious treasures of wisdom and fountain-head of knowledge, and did not hesitate to draw much from their sources.

The historical report about the intimate intercourse of the Greek sages with the Jewish philosophers is not a fiction of proud Rabbis as some, perhaps, may suppose, but is very old and is stated by heathen and Christian authors.

Thus relates Eusebius (praep. Evang. ix: c. 3.) Kleanthus, a disciple of Aristotle informs us, that Aristotle had an acquaintance with a Jew in Palestine who was educated in the Egyptian school, with whom he conversed about philosophical subjects, and confessed that he learned more from the Jew than the Jew could have learned from him.

Even so remarks the very reliable ancient historian, Philo, that the learned Jews in Alexandria have shown to the heathen, without restraint and in a clear manner, the foolishness, groundlessness, perversity and immorality of their heathen rites and doctrines.

All those heathen who aspired for truth and morality paid homage to the Jewish religious principles.

Aye, even princes of Greek Macedonian origin became

true adherents of Judaism. Hence, it must be admitted by every lover of truth that the Egyptian Jews had a great share in promoting the civilization of nations.

Thus acknowledges also Numenius of Apamen, that the great philosopher, Plato, has been nothing else but an Athenian speaking Moses.

It is therefore obviously proved by all this that the schools of the Alexandrian Jews gained a very great reputation, and that there must have been among them many original thinkers, so that Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle were considered as their disciples.

Egypt has consequently been the seat of learning and culture, where all the ancient literati have learned arts and sciences that reached us through the middle ages.

Thales, who was born at Milet, 640 b. c. e., established first in his fatherland the knowledge which he acquired in the schools of Egyptian priests. Pythagoras, who was born 534 b. c. e., initiated himself like Thales into the mysteries of Egypt in order to transplant scientific researches of this country to his native land, and has given by that means another direction to the studies, having employed their method of experience.

He and his disciples had already very correct ideas of the parallax, the general arrangements concerning the different parts of our solar system and of the place occupied by the earth.

They maintain that the earth revolves around the sun, that the comets have their periodical revolutions, and that the stars are even as many suns around which other stars are moving.

A truism which has been attacked until the time of Galileo.

A hundred years later, namely, 434 b. c. e., appeared Plato.

He was already a philosopher when twenty years of age and acknowledged, after having heard Socrates, a primitive general cause as a supreme being, describing it in Timaeus as the father of the universe, and maintained like his great teacher, Socrates, that the human soul is immortal, and that mankind will merely gain its destiny upon earth by a true philosophy.

These heathen philosophers laid down fundamental maxims, as Christianity did, and could not teach them better in later times.

I pass now over in silence all other philosophical systems of the Greeks and Romans, and will only mention some facts that the heathen made constant progress in the civilizing arts and sciences.

In a memorable poem entitled, "*De natura rerum*," composed by Lucretius, a contemporary of Cicero (106 b. c. e.), we find the very correct idea that the fall of heavy bodies is not alike respecting all bodies, a minute description of the flash of lightning, etc., etc.

In Seneca are observations given about the magnifying which glass globes produce by refraction and concave mirrors by reflection and even some other ones about the colors of the rainbow, forming themselves by prisms and about the decrease of heat in the highest regions of atmosphere.

He speaks of different colors of the stars and maintains that the comets have a regular course and that the earth-

quakes are engendered through the fire in the centre of the terrestrial globe.

Plinius (23 c. e.) gives us some views in his natural history about the formation of electricity by friction and about different electric appearances.

The ancient literati seem, according to Plinius, to have occupied themselves with conducting the lightning.

He says in reference to Tullus Hostilius (Plin. lib. ii: c. 53):

"Quod scilicet fulminis evocationem imitatum parum rite Tullum Hostilium ietum fulmine."

That is, in the same moment, when he tried to carry down the lightning in the same manner as Numa (716 b. c. e.), but lacking skill Tullus was killed by it.

We find also in Lucan, a Roman poet (38 b. c. e.), in reference to the same subject a very remarkable passage:

" * * * Aruns dispersos fulminis ignes,
Colligit, et terra moesto cum murmure condit."*

That is, "It is said of Aruns, who was very experienced in the motions of the flash of lightning, that he collected the fire scattered in the air, and buried it in the earth."

Probably these ideas occasioned Benjamin Franklin to discover the conduction of lightning.

Even so have passed over to the Greeks and Romans the chemical arts which the Egyptians exercised with the most happy results.

For the Egyptians were very skillful in the art of dyeing stuffs, in the manipulation of metals, in the cleaning of soda or natron, and extracting the kali of the ashes.

Next to them the Phoenicians have had a very extensive knowledge in the arts which depend on chemistry.

They were expert in the use of copper, gold, silver, lead, tin and iron.

They understood how to win these metals of their ore, to alloy them and to produce different metallic mixtures, for instance, litharge, vitriol, etc., etc.

Thus was mankind flourishing more and more, and became always richer in spirit, inventions, discoveries and all kinds of human culture.

But as soon as Christianity began spreading over the Roman Empire, all knowledge, arts and sciences died away, and the development of civilization was retarded and checked.

For all colleges and academies where the sciences were taught by non-Christians were closed by force, and instead of studying the subjects, they commenced wrangling and quarreling about mere expressions and words, and all sunk into barbarity and extreme darkness. Such was the state of affairs until the eighth century, when Leo, the Isaurian, this furious iconoclast threatened with banishment the last remnants of sciences and arts.

His cruelty was so great that he let burn at night twelve clergymen, who were his ecclesiastical counsellors, but did not participate in his abhorrence against images.

Everything seemed consequently to contribute to the destruction of sciences, and all the exertions of human spirit from the whole antiquity in Egypt, Asia, Greece and Italy would have been lost altogether from civilization if a great many books had not escaped the banishment on account of

having been partly preserved in monasteries and partly by the Arabians, who by their intercourse with the Jews and Greeks became acquainted with scientific knowledge, and interested themselves indefatigably in culture, philosophy, medicine and natural history, and preserved thus the original works of the Greeks and Romans.

They established universities in Asia, Africa and Europe, especially in Cordova in Spain, where the most eminent Greek works have been translated and studied, and promoted the sciences generally, so that their seats of learning were also frequented by Christians.

During that time when they restricted themselves in the Christian states to the cloisters, where the most renowned bishops condemned the study of the ancients and did nothing else but compose biographies of saints, collected legends, drew up a register of heretics, wrote excommunications and anathemas. Yes, during that time Christian courts rendered verdicts not according to wise and just laws, but by ordeals or so-called God's judgments; for instance, if the suspected person could plunge the bare arm to the elbow in boiling water without being hurt, or could walk barefoot and blindfolded over nine red hot plowshares laid lengthwise at unequal distances and escape unhurt, or could conquer in duel, or could swallow the sanctified morsel without bursting, or could stay with stretched arms in the form of a cross the longest time, such an individual was argued innocent, it was evidence that God let such persons conquer. During the time, I say, when all these went on in the Christian Empire, the study of sciences, arts and

literature, and the endeavors for the civilization of nations were to be found among the Mohammedans.

Though Charlemagne, from 768 to 814, had established schools which were superintended by men whom he called from England and Ireland, and where the study of rhetoric, dialectics and astronomy were pursued with great ardor, all those schools were nearly closed during the reign of his successors immediately after him, namely, under Ludwig the Pious and Charles the Bold, and Europe was plunged in darkness until the 13th century.

In the 13th century appeared Roger Bacon, a Franciscan Professor at Oxford, with the surname "Magnus," and who was also called "Doctor admirabilis," the wonderful teacher.

It came into his mind, probably occasioned by the study of Pythagoras, to consult nature through experiments, and to shake off the yoke of scholastic authority.

This was, however, an unprecedented innovation, and caused him severe persecutions.

He was sentenced by a Franciscan General to an imprisonment for life and to live on bread and water, because of having tried to destroy prejudices with which his age was filled up. He was afterwards released with a proviso, that he should not meddle any more with physics.

Hence it was Christianity which threw all sorts of obstacles in the way of civilization, checked, suppressed and choked it altogether in the fourteenth century. Only from the fifteenth century when a revival of the original classical works took place and the old system of the Greek, Oriental and the so-called Philosophy of Moses, did progress continue.

Especially as the example given by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Toricelly and others in natural philosophy was crowned with the most happy results, and stirred men's minds to seek general knowledge and philosophy, civilization commenced its course with renewed vigor.

Positive religion was then from day to day much less considered as a source or standard of philosophical knowledge, and the exclusive right of giving the last decision on all subjects in question was generally adjudged to reason.

Although the Inquisition condemned, in the year 1515, the systems of Copernicus, who revived the idea of Pythagoras that the earth revolves on its axis, and declared such an idea as false, philosophic, absurd and heretical, Galileo defended nevertheless the Copernican system in the year 1616.

He was forced, indeed, at the age of 69, to abjure this system before the Court in Rome in the following manner: "I abjure, condemn and curse the error of the motion of the earth," but in spite of that, he taught that the earth moves on its axis.

He was afterwards arrested, as it was expected, and sentenced to an imprisonment for life.

A violent struggle of reason with the mechanism of usages took place everywhere, and the opposition to the superior criticism of the positive religion which is arrogated over reason became stronger more and more.

The spirit itself wrestled with old established customs in order to give continually new life and stir in the march of intellect, and to render great services to truth, beauty and justice.

Hail to those unterrified philosophers who were not afraid of suffering persecution, and risked even their lives and liberty in order to build the truth on unshakable pillars, and to trace out the way to the coming generations which shall be taken to find out new truisms, and to promote civilization.

If now the Asiatics and a great many other nations are benumbed in the midst of their cultivation, it is not on account of not having embraced Christianity, but of being under the tyrannical dominion of ancient customs.

Thus, for instance, a philosophy was and is prevailing among the Arabs now exactly as it was in vogue among the Christian nations in the middle ages, when positive religion was the center and rule of all reasonings, demanding an unconditional blind faith, and checking all progress and development.

Hence it follows that only since the revival of the Platonic philosophy in Italy, from whence it spread extensively abroad, out of which came the pure systems of better wisdom, ancient civilization and culture have also been revived, and are constantly promoted and developed.

The bold searcher after truth ventured to run the risk of being burned alive or tortured by the so-called Holy Inquisition, and threw light with the torch of truth upon the works of darkness in all its relations and bearings.

The great salutary principle of religious liberty and freedom of conscience which they laid down and pleaded with a convincing force, conquered finally, and a mild, social bond entwines itself by degrees around nations, trying to

come always nearer together in order to unite for common purposes.

It is true that the maturity of reason in the present time is thriving very slowly; but the surer, it seems to me, will the high aim be gained.

For it is merely founded on intellectual power, freedom of conscience, natural rights, high talents for the arts, and a true morality.

If now this high spiritual position of humanity is to be preserved for the later generations, it is obviously necessary that they do not waste thousands and millions of dollars for Christian Mission and Tract Societies, but rather to establish Universities in this country also, as they are flourishing in Europe, where they proved always as the best centers of all scientific knowledge and progressive enlightenment.

For universities, emancipated from hierarchical power and from the influence of every religious party or sect, are, as they were, the locomotives of human spirit, leading it with the rapidity of lightning onward and upward.

It is high time to make the public aware of the indispensable necessity of such institutions; because every close observer of our public affairs will surely, with great sorrow, ascertain that the priests of different denominations endeavor, like the polypi with their tentacles, to catch every opportunity to meddle with politics, and nestle, wherever it is possible, their illiberal, absurd and antiquated ideas.

The universities would be the most powerful armies to protect us against the clerical drawbacks and corruption, and would also be the formidable monitors on the stormy ocean of life to secure us our free institutions.

Yes, a free university in every State of the Union would be like a shining sun enlightening all the classes of people, and promoting the welfare and prosperity of all nations as well as of every individual in particular, without any distinction.

Such institutions only will be the means by which a religion, founded on incontestable reasonable arguments, will be established for all mankind, diffusing brotherly love towards all nations, virtue and justice more and more, so that every barbarity and war and war-whoop will disappear forever.

They will bring on the time which the prophets have foreseen, and the poets have dreamed, that nation against nation will never wage war any more, and nowhere shall force reign supreme, but only strict justice shall prevail.

Happy they who can promote such a great work crowned with blessings. But thrice happy will be those who shall live to see the time when the history of all nations will not be filled with bloody military exploits, nor with the victories of diplomatic contrivances, but with the general happy achievements of the gigantic progress of civilization and culture of all mankind.

THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE *

As the society under whose auspices I have the pleasure to lecture this evening bears the name, Philological Society, a term which means primarily a love of words, or a desire to know the origin and construction of language, and consequently expresses the great value which all its members ascribe to such a study, I trust that they will listen attentively to the subject of which I am about to treat. I hope it will also attract the attention of all; because man is the most interesting study for man, he being the crown of the whole creation in this lower world. I take it for granted that your interest in the theme will be stimulated if, firstly I dwell on his escutcheon of nobility, namely, on the faculty of expressing words and articulate sounds. Homer expressed this human superiority by giving to man the epithet "*μέροπες*," as where he mentioned "*μέροπες μνηρωποι*" men endowed with an articulate voice.

It is not to be wondered at, that many philologists, seemingly partly misled by oriental traditions which were wrapt in a figurative garb and partly by their superficial examination of many of the features of language, taught that it was either originally created and bestowed upon the first man in the same manner as all other faculties and knowledge, or revealed by supernatural power.

For when we present to the mind's eye the great, en-

* Lecture delivered at Newark in 1877.

chanting beauty, potency and miraculous agency of language, in all the channels of life, and its wonderful diversity, extending over the whole face of the globe, we are almost deluded into the supposition that it is something supernatural, a daughter of heaven, and not born of man.

But such views tend rather to impede and check the development of language and to injure its perfection. For do not all the genera of languages resemble the genera of plants, animals, and even of men themselves, in the nearly endless multiplicity of their changing forms? And does not language, when under favorable circumstances, flourish like a tree, which, if its path be unobstructed, is able to spread its branches freely in every direction, but if allowed to remain undeveloped, neglected and unnourished, like a plant, pines away and withers for scarcity of light and soil?

It is very strange, indeed, that such a great lexicographer as Noah Webster, in the year 1842, still maintained in his common, standard dictionary (Introduction p. 23), that language was of divine origin, or in other words, the immediate gift of God, which statement has also been retained in the revised editions of the work by A. Goodrich, a Professor in Yale College. This is an antiquated idea, and according to ancient and modern research, is a gross mistake, as I shall endeavor to demonstrate.

Herder, the renowned German poet and linguist, who out of a host of able competitors, succeeded in obtaining the prize offered by the Academy of Science at Berlin, Prussia, in 1772, for the best essay on the origin of language, stated and proved beyond a reasonable doubt the human origin of language.

This inestimable essay was and is undoubtedly not so generally known as it ought to be; else some renowned linguists would not have adopted and retained the egregious though plausible error which is contained in Webster's dictionary.

I will, therefore, try to give in a clear and succinct manner, not only Herder's elaborate theory concerning the topic in question, but also its development and expansion, together with many new ideas suggested by study and investigations made by later European linguists, up to the present day.

When we contemplate language closely and without prepossession, we find that it is not only a medium of the intellectual power which elevates man above all creatures on the face of the earth, but that it is a faculty which man possesses on account of his belonging to the animal kingdom. All the violent and most painful sensations of his body and all the strong passions of his soul vent themselves in cries, accents and wild, inarticulate sounds. A suffering beast, as well as the hero Philoctetes, if forsaken upon a dreary island without possible hope of receiving assistance from a fellow creature, when seized with pain, would whimper, whine and groan. It seems as though it respires more easily by giving vent to its burning breath, oppressed with anguish.

It seems as though it would diminish its suffering by sighs and inhale new vigor at least from the empty atmosphere to endure the pain, by filling up the deaf winds with groaning.

So little has nature created us to be like secluded rocks or egoistical monads.

Even the most poignant torments of the animal feeling, the sound and exertion of which do not proceed from discretion or long deliberation, the nature of which, in fact, cannot be investigated by scrutinizing reason these, without being conscious of any sympathy of others, are directed in their play to make an impression upon other creatures.

The touched chord does its natural duty—it sounds; it evokes a conformable, feeling echo, even when there is none, and when it does not hope and expect to get any answer.

Should physiology ever progress so far, that it will demonstrate psychology, which I doubt very much, it will throw a great deal of light on this manifestation, through a dissection of the contexture of the nerves; but perhaps it will divide it into single, very small and flat ligaments.

Upon the whole, let us not take for granted that it is a law of nature, that there is a feeling creature which cannot shut within itself any of its lively sensations, and that it has to express by a sound every one of them, at the first unexpected moment, without any discretion or purpose.

This was, as it were, the last motherly touch of the plastic hand of nature which endowed all on earth with the law: Do not feel only for yourself, but give your feelings vocal utterance.

And as this last, creative touch of the whole genus was of one kind, this law became a blessing. Your sensations shall sound to your genus in a like manner, and shall be therefore sensed with sympathy by every one of them.

Now, shall nobody touch this weak, sensitive creature!

It appears to be all alone and exposed to the hostile terrific storms of the world, and yet it is not alone. Being tenderly strung, it is linked with all nature that has hidden sounds in the chords which, when becoming excited and roused, awaken again other creatures of equally delicate form that throw out some sparks, as it were, by an invisible chain into a distant heart, to kindle the fire of feeling for this unseen creature.

These sighs and sounds are speech. Hence, there is a language of feeling which is a direct law of nature. It is true, that certain fragmentary relics rather than whole sentences testify that these were originally common to man and beast; but these relics are indisputable.

Our artful language might have displaced that of nature, our civil life and social politeness might have checked, dried up and divested the flood and sea of passion in any manner that could ever be imagined, yet the most violent moment of feeling, no matter where or how seldom it may happen, assumes again its right, and sounds through its mother tongue directly, by accents.

The irritable storm of passion, the surprise of exhilarating joy and cheerfulness, the attack of pain and distress which make deep furrows in the soul, and the overpowering sensation of vengeance, despair, fury, fear, horror, etc., all announce themselves, every one of them differently, according to its own kind.

There are as many keys as there are kinds of sensibility, slumbering in our nature.

I must remark now, that the less human nature and that of any species of animals are congenial and the less

their contextures of nerves are homogeneous, the less is such language of nature comprehensible to us.

We understand, as earthlings, much better an earthling than an aquatic animal. And again, of the terrestrial animals we understand the herds better than the creatures of the woods, and among the herds we understand those best that approach us the nearest. In that regard however, intercourse and habit play a more or less important part.

It is natural, that an Arab, whose horse constitutes his sole possession, understands it much better than one who bestrides a horse for the first time, and that he can really talk as well with his steed as Hector is said to have done in the Iliad. The Arab in the desert, seeing no living being around him, except his camel and perhaps the flight of migratory birds, can be believed more easily to understand the nature of the first and the screams of the latter, than could we, who very seldom, if ever, come in contact with them.

The son of the woods, the hunter, understands the voices of the stag, and the Laplander that of the reindeer. This is the result of experience, contact or association and if there are instances of happening otherwise, they prove to be exceptions.

This language of nature is indeed a language for all.

Every species makes use of it, and has its peculiar speech understood among its own kind, and thus man has one of his own.

It is true, that these sounds are very simple, and when articulated and spelled on paper, as for instance, interjections, the most contrary sensations have nearly one and

the same expression. For example, the exclamation "Ah!" is expressive of joy and exultation, as well as of complaint, dislike, pity, etc. "Aha!" is an expression of triumph, contempt, or simple surprise. "Ha!" is an exclamation used to denote surprise, joy or grief.

"Ha!", with the long sound of ā, is used as a question and is equivalent to: "What do you say?" etc. But are these sounds, the senses of which are distinguished by very different modes of utterances, are these, I say, to be drawn on paper as interjections?

The tear swimming in a dim, almost extinct eye languishing after consolation, how touching it is, in the whole picture of a face expressive of deep grief; but take it alone, and it is but a drop of water. Look at it through a microscope, and I do not desire to know what may be there revealed. The declining breath, the half sigh, that dies so touchingly upon the lip twisted by pain, if you separate it from all its living supporters, is then nothing more or less than an empty breath of air.

Can it be otherwise, concerning the sounds of sensations? They are sufficiently touching when they are in their living connection, in the whole picture of the working nature, accompanied with many other appearances; but separated from all, torn from their place and deprived of life, they are nothing but ciphers.

The voice of nature is an arbitrarily drawn letter.

These sounds of language are, indeed, very few; but the sensitive nature, as far as it is only mechanically suffering has less principal kinds of sensations than our psychologies count and impute falsely to the soul as passions.

Sounds do not talk much but powerfully; whether the plaintive tone whines and whimpers about the wounds of the soul or body; whether the faint "ah!" presses itself to the bosom of love with a kiss or a tear. Speech was not called into existence to stress all such differences.

It calls to a picture and this picture then speaks for itself. It sounds, but portrays nothing. Pain borders on pleasure. Nature has tied their ends together in a sensational feeling. Hence, what more can the speech of sensation do than to show such points of contact? I believe I can justly maintain, that in all original languages there still sound fragments of the accents of nature; but certainly they are not the main strings of the human language. They are not the real roots, but the sap that quickens the roots of the language.

A fine, metaphysical language, invented in later times, which is a breed of the original wild mother of mankind, perhaps in the fourth degree, and which then, after thousands of years of degeneracy, is again during many centuries refined, civilized and humanized, such a child of reason and society can only know very little or nothing at all of the infancy of its first mother.

The old, the wild languages, the nearer they are to their origin, the more they will contain of it.

I cannot treat here of the very minute details of language, I can only contemplate the rough materials.

There is still no word in existence, but only sounds, to form a word of sensation. Consider only the interjections, the roots of nouns and verbs of those languages

we have mentioned, and you will find that they have adopted many fragments of these sounds.

The most ancient, oriental languages are full of exclamations for which modern nations have sometimes nothing but blanks, or a dull, deaf misapprehension.

In their elegies, sound the roaring, plaintive tones, like those of savages at their graves, and these are a long, continued interjection of the language of nature.

The shouts of joy and repeated hallelujahs that sound in their psalms or praise of God, we often consider a meaningless solemnity. Again, in the passages and strains of poems and songs of other ancient nations there still sounds the accent which quickens and enlivens their warlike and religious dances, the dirges and hymns of rejoicing of the savages whether they live at the foot of Cordillera or in the region of the Iroquois, in Brazil or upon the Caribbean Islands.

The roots of their most simple and powerful, earliest verbs are those first exclamations of nature which have been moulded afterwards, and the languages of all ancient and uncivilized nations, especially in regard to this inner, living accent, are always inexpressible by foreigners.

Although I shall only explain later on most of those phenomena in connection with one another; I will, nevertheless, speak now of one.

A philologist, one of the defenders of the divine origin of language, admires the divine order in the circumstance, that all sounds of the languages known to us can be signified by some twenty letters. This assertion is not founded in fact and the deduction made is groundless. Not one living

language can be completely represented in letters, much less in some twenty.

This is testified by all the languages, without any exception. The articulations of our organs of speech are so many, and every sound can be pronounced in so many different ways, that, as the learned Mr. Lambert in the second part of his "Organon" has correctly shown we have far less letters than sounds, and hence the latter can only be expressed by the former, in a very imperfect manner.

As this has been shown in regard to the German language which has not yet had its multisonous dialects and their differences represented in a scriptural language, how much more will this be the case when the whole language is nothing but a living dialect?

Do not most peculiarities and singularities in orthography arise from the great difficulty to write exactly as one speaks? What living language, in regard to the right pronunciation of its sounds, can be learned by studying the mere letters in a book? And what dead language can therefore be awakened?

The more a language is a living tongue, the less there is thought to represent it by letters; the more it leads back to the original unselected sound of nature the less can it be written, and much less signified by some twenty letters. For foreigners, it is often entirely impossible of acquirement.

Mr. P. Rasles, who lived ten years amongst the Abenkiers in this country, complained that in spite of his assiduous application to the pronunciation of their words, he would often repeat only half a word, and thus made himself the laughing stock of the tribe; but how much greater ridicule

would he have elicited, had he attempted to make them with French letters.

P. Chaumont, who spent fifty years among the Hurons and tried to compose a grammar of their language, complains, nevertheless, of their guttural sounds and especially of their inexpressible accents. Two words consisting sometimes of the same letters, have, nevertheless, widely different meanings. Garcilasso di Vega complains of the Spaniards, that they have disfigured, mutilated and falsified the sounds of the Peruvian language, and on account of such falsification, charged the Peruvian with having been responsible for the worst.

De la Condamine stated, that a part of the words of a small tribe at the Amazon river cannot be written down even in an incomplete manner. We must use at least nine or ten syllables in signifying one word, when they seem scarcely to express three syllables in their pronunciation. La Loubre states, that when a European speaks ten words of the Siamese language, hardly one word is understood by the native.

We may take ever so much pains to signify their sounds by our letters, it is all in vain.

But why should we refer to nations in remote countries? How much are we ourselves worried to signify in writing all the tones of the English language, and how little is one an English speaker, who understands the written or printed English?

How greatly is the German troubled to represent all his sounds by letters, as for instance eu, äu, etc., ch, che, etc.? The Frenchmen who uses far less guttural sounds,

the Half Greek, and the Italian who speaks as it were, in the highest part of the mouth, in a finer ether, each still retains a living sound.

These accents remain within the organs of speech, where they have been produced. They have been signified by letters, but although the long use of writing made them one kind, easy and simple, they are, nevertheless, merely shadows. Hence, it is obvious, as I have remarked before that the assumption of divine origin of languages, as a fact, is without support and hence the conclusion founded upon the false premise goes for naught.

By a close investigation, we do not come to a divine but rather to an animal origin of language.

If we consider the Hebrew, which is the better cultivated Phœnician language, that has been and still is called by many a divine, first language, which bequeathed the alphabet or A B C to most parts of the world, we will find, that it had in the beginning living sounds, such as could not be written and were very imperfectly signified, as for instance a hard and soft gimmel or shin, etc.

This is also clearly proved by the whole structure of its grammar, the manifold changes of similar letters and especially the total lack of vowels.

Where does this singularity come from, that the letters of the Hebrew language are only consonants, and the ground work or foundation of the words upon which all depends, the vowels, were originally not written at all? This mode of writing, says Herder, is so contrary to the usual course of common sense, that is, writing down the inessential and omitting the substance, that it would be incomprehensible

to grammarians, if they were in the habit of comprehending a matter thoroughly.

Amongst us, the vowels are foremost, the breath of life, the soul, the doorhinges of speech, but amongst the Hebrews, they were not written at all. Why? Because they could not be written. The pronunciation of them were so living, so finely articulated, and the breathing of them so spiritual and ethereal, that it passed off and could not be presented in letters. The Greeks were the first who filled the living aspirations on a string of vowels which had to come to the assistance of the *spiritus asper* and *lenis*, etc., and this could not be done by the Orientals; because among them the speech itself was, as it were, a *spiritus*, a confined breathing, a spirit of the mouth, "Ruach Peh," as they called it in their highly figurative poems.

It was God's spirit, a breathing air, caught through the ear and the dead letters by which it was represented were merely the compasses, that, when pronounced, had to be animated by a spirit of life.

Here, is not the place to dwell upon the great influence which this exercised on the comprehension of their language; but so much is certain, that this breathing reveals to us the origin of their language. I must add also, that although the oriental Sanscrit language, the oldest language in India, and perhaps in the whole world, which possessed according to the latest investigations the finest gradations of sound, signifying the most vowels by letters, had nevertheless no particular characters or signs to represent the short *é* and *ó* ("Critical Grammar of the Sanscrit Language," by Franz Bopp, page 10). Hence the Sanscrit

writing, which is called "Dêwanagari," the writing of the Gods, was imperfect by not representing by signs all the breathings of the mouth.

Again, what is there, that can be less represented by writing than the inarticulated sounds of nature?

It must be admitted, that the nearer a language is to its origin, the more is it inarticulated. It follows then from this, that it was not given by a higher being, to be represented in twenty-two, twenty-four or any other number of letters, and that the characters were not revealed, but were imperfect attempts of latter times to put down some marks of remembrance, and that the language did not originate in the letters of a divine grammar, but in wild sounds produced by free, human organs of speech.

Indeed, it would be very strange that God should have composed letters, by and for which He made the language, and that these very letters, through whose instrumentality He taught language to the first men should really be the most imperfect in the world. They express nothing at all of the spirit of the language and show evidently by their whole structure that they do not want to say anything about it.

The hypothesis concerning the letters deserved according to its importance but little consideration; yet being usually palliated in different ways, it was necessary to show its groundlessness.

I will now return to our subject. As our sounds of nature are intended for the expression of passion, it is natural that they become the elements of all emotion.

Who is there, whose heart is not deeply moved, when a

quivering, sobbing patient, or a person groaning in the agony of death, or even a heaving animal, when his whole machine is suffering, utters the sounds of woe? Who is such an insensible barbarian, that he will remain untouched by hearing it?

The sensitive music of the stringed instrument of animals—the more it harmonizes with that of other animals, the more these sympathize with each other.

Their sinews are set in an equal sound and they suffer mechanically, nearly the same pain.

How must a man steel his fibres, and how much strength is necessary for his closing the openings of his sensibility that he shall become deaf and hard hearted to such a melancholy state.

Diderot thinks, that anyone who is born blind must be more insensible to the complaint of a suffering creature than a man who is able to use his eyes; but I am of the opinion, that under certain circumstances it is just the contrary.

It is true, that the whole, affecting spectacle of a poor, quivering and agonized creature is veiled from him; but many examples teach us that under such a veil, the faculty of hearing, being much less diverted and listening more attentively, is impressed the more strongly. There he listens in the dark silence of eternal night, and every plaintive tone pierces, like an arrow, much deeper and sharper into his heart. Now, if he is also assisted by slowly groping, touching the convulsions, and feeling with his hands the whole fracture of the suffering machine, fear and horror seize his limbs, his inner nervous system feels simul-

taneously the fracture and the ruin, and the cry of death resounds. That is the bond of the language of nature. The Europeans, in spite of their culture and vicious formations, were everywhere powerfully touched by the plaintive tones of savages. In his narratives of Brazil, Levi relates that the hearty, wild cries of love and affability of those Americans moved his people to tears. Charleroix and others knew not how to express the horrible impression made upon them by the war cries and bewitching songs of the North American Indian tribes.

The old poetry and music were enlivened by these sounds of nature. Thus, for instance, the ancient Greek song and dance, the old Greek stage and especially its music, dance and poetry, generally make a great impression upon all strangers, even nowadays. And even among us, where reason has superseded feeling, and the refined and artful language of society has discarded the sounds of nature, do not the greatest thunders of oratory, the mightiest strains of poetry and the enchanting moments of action, often resemble this language of nature by imitation?

What is it, that performs miracles among the assembled people, pierces the hearts and revolutionizes the souls? Is it the elegant, spiritual speech? The metaphysics? Parables and figures? Art and cold conviction? Certainly, if there be not a blind excitement, a great deal has to be performed by them, but all?—And the highest moment, the climax of this blind excitement, by what was it occasioned? Indeed! by quite another power.

These tones, these gesticulations, these simple passages of melody, this sudden turn, that faltering voice, what

more do I know? They work a thousand times more on children and sensitive people, on women, on persons of tender feelings, on the sick, tired and afflicted, than even the truth could work, were its soft tender voice sounded from heaven.

These words, that tone, the turn of this horrible romance etc., so pervaded us when heard for the first time in our childhood, that I can hardly tell what host of secondary notions of horror, solemnity, dread, fear and joy entered with them into our souls.

The word sounds, and like an army of spirits they all rise at once in their gloomy majesty from the grave of our souls, and render obscure the pure and clear idea of the word, which could only be comprehended without them. The word died away and the tone of feeling sounds.

An obscure feeling overpowers us, the giddy-headed is struck with fear and trembles, not however on account of conceiving some thoughts, but on account of hearing some syllables and sounds of childhood, and it is the bewitching power of the orator or poet which has brought us back into the state of childhood. No reflection or consideration but the law of nature alone is at the bottom.

Sound of feeling produces in the sympathetic creature the same tone. If we will therefore call these direct sounds of feeling, speech, I find its origin very natural. It is not supernatural, but evidently rooted in animal life. It is the law of nature of a sensitive machine.

As man, however, is distinguished above all animals by reason and reflection, the invention of language is natural to him. The power of his soul acts so freely, that it can

separate, take hold of and direct the attention, and be conscious that it is attentive to one billow, if I may say so, in the whole ocean of sensations which send it through all senses, aye, of the whole hovering dream of images that glide before his senses, he can collect himself, in an awakening moment, to dwell spontaneously upon one image, to take care of it, and to mark its characteristics, so that this and no other is the object. This first sign of his consciousness was the word of the soul, and with it human language was invented.

There is, for instance, the lamb. It is present before his mind's eye, as an image together with many other objects, images and colors, in one great, natural scenery. How much and how difficult to discern! All characteristics are very closely and finely entwined, all inexpressible! Who is able to speak forms? Who can sound colors?

He puts his hand upon the lamb. The feeling is surer and fuller, but, however full it is, so abstruse is it, that who can name what he feels? But hark! the lamb is bleating! There a characteristic tears itself from the canvas of the colored image wherein there was so little to discern, and enters deep and distinct into his soul! It catches it, and has a sounding word!

Aha! says the unripe scholar, now I will know thee again, thou art bleating. The turtle dove is cooing, the dog barking! Here are three words, while he is trying to form three ideas. These belong to his logic, the others to his dictionary.

Reason and faculty of speech made a timorous step in

common, and nature met them half way by the sense of hearing.

The whole multisonous nature is the teacher of language. It lets all creatures pass before the man, bearing their names upon its tongue, and presenting itself as vassal and servant to this visible representative of God upon earth. It gives him a sign, like a tribute, to mark it down in the book of his dominion, that he may remember it by its name, call and make use of it in future.

The truism, says Herder, that reason by which man governs becomes the father of a living language by abstracting from the different accents of sounding objects the difference of characteristics could not be stated in an oriental style, in a nobler and more beautiful way than "God brought all animals to Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatever Adam called every living creature, that be the name thereof."

Here it is unequivocally said in a poetical style, that man himself invented speech by the accents of the living nature, characteristics of his ruling reason.

The structure of the language shows their human origin. According to the regular, thinking mode of the spirit, the subjects, the germs of our knowledge, the centre upon which all depends, must be first and have to stand before the predicate. In all original languages, however, we find just the contrary.

To judge of such a diction, we must come to the conclusion, that it is the production of a hearkening, listening, creature, but not of a heavenly spirit. Because a heavenly genius would be ashamed of such work, that mentions

first sounding verbs as the first elements, the actions, and still nothing that acts; but so sensitive, human creatures. For, as I have already shown, it could not be more intensely touched than by sounding actions.

Indeed the whole construction of the language shows the different stages of development of the human spirit and the history of its inventions.

Besides all this, the idea of the higher origin, as it seems to be, is very ungodly. It degrades God at every step by the lowest anthropomorphism.

The human origin of the language, however, shows God in the greatest light. It tells us, that the human soul, God's work, created a language and is improving and creating anew all the time; because being his work, and a human soul, insofar it is human, it becomes in a dignified manner, divine.

From all I have said, it is obvious that God has not created any language, but has given the power of speech to mankind, that it may develop itself, as it has done for thousands of years in various ways; and like all human works and inventions it will reach a higher perfection as time goes on. A comparison of the specimens of speech of any language will make even a pyrrhonist agree to this statement.

Mr. Grimm, one of the greatest German linguists of our time, expressed the same opinion. He remarked, that every well-developed, warm blooded animal, fowls as well as mammalia, always has its own peculiar, attracting and repelling sound, expressive of its sensitiveness now to comfort and pleasure, and now to pain. In fact, those animals

whose organisation differs more widely from ours, the fowls, are endowed with a melodious, most pleasing and heart cheering singing.

Nature has evidently implanted various sounds into each and every animal, and these they produce without having ever learned them. Suppose a fledgeling, taken from its nest, was fed from human hand, it would still be capable of producing all sounds peculiar to its kind, although it were entirely isolated.

Therefore the assigned voice to every species of animals always remains monotonous and immutable. That which is innate, has because of its innateness, an indestructible character. Thus the bees form their hexagonal cells at all times without the slightest deviation from the model and plan ordained to them by the Creator and Governor of the Universe.

The voice of animals is diametrically opposed to the human voice, which is of a constantly changeable nature and must be acquired by study. The exception is whimpering, weeping and sighing, or other outbursts of corporeal sensibility, which is always alike among all nations and can justly be compared with the cry of the animal voice.

Supposing an infant, born of a French or Russian mother on a battlefield, were adopted and brought up by a German in Germany. Such a child would not speak the French or Russian tongue, but would begin to speak German, like all other children among whom he was reared.

Language was consequently not implanted by nature. Space and time give occasion to changes of the human language. The reason for this is, that they may serve to

multiply and quicken the train of thought. Hence, the human language is neither innate nor revealed, but must have been acquired by ourselves with full liberty as to origin and progress. As Alexander von Humboldt correctly stated (*Cosmos* 1, 383): "Languages are the spiritual products of mankind."

This is true; because as the human language was in the beginning very imperfect and was continually improved and refined, it could not have proceeded from God, whose works ever bear the stamp of perfection.

The Creator blessed us with two precious gifts, a soul,—that is, a power to think,—and organs of speech, that is, a power to speak; but as we are only thinking when we exercise that faculty so we are only speaking when we learn the language.

To view this interesting subject more fully, I will present in only a few words, the main ideas on this topic by the profound German linguist, Jacob Grimm.

"The theory of a revealed language" says this illustrious scholar, "it seems to me, must be very welcome to all those who place at the beginning of human history a state of paradisaical innocence, which was afterwards ruined by the fall of the first man, causing mankind to lose their most noble gifts and capacities, so that their Godlike language fell from its highest pinnacle, and they could therefore hand it down to their posterity in but a very poor and damaged condition."

Such a view, however, is in contradiction with the records of our Holy Scriptures, which do not mention anywhere the revelation of a human language, but presuppose the

existence of it (which remained unexplained) and tell us about its confusion a long time after the fall of the first man. "Here," says Professor Grimm, "my inquiry reached a theological standpoint, at which it dared not be alarmed."

We signify by the term "revelation" a communication or manifestation of something that was before unknown to mankind. The Greeks call it "apokalypsis" (disclosure), and the Romans signify it by the word "revelation" unveiling. All these terms, convey one and the same idea—that which was covered before has been unveiled. There can be no doubt, that a first, creative power pervades and preserves incessantly its whole work.

The wonder of the preservation of the Universe equals that of its creation.

This divine power, manifesting itself uninterruptedly, is revelation, perceived distinctly by none except the intelligent inquirer. And being everywhere, it lies open, and is at the same time hidden. Nature is speaking, but she is not understood, and so long as the searcher after truth cannot trace her footsteps, she is unintelligible to him.

The simple and childlike notion of antiquity that there was a direct intercourse of the godhead with men is, of course, incomprehensible, and as little admissible as most other myths. For if God had shown himself visible in the beginning, why should He have ceased afterwards to appear? This is contrary to the idea of perpetuity, which must be necessarily attributed to the first cause.

A being, that is self-existent and has never been created, cannot have any history; because there is no change in it,

and hence it is always one and the same throughout eternity.

One feels himself fixed in a circle of contradictions, which wherever they may present themselves can hardly be more apparent than where a divine origin of the human language is to be maintained.

The human language can neither have been directly revealed to nor implanted in men. The innate language would have made them beasts, and a revealed one would have presupposed them to be gods. We must, therefore, admit that the human language, according to its origin and progress, was gained by the free exertion of man; for it is our history and our heritage.

Thus we see, that all which we are and by which we are distinguished from all other animal creatures is signified in the Sanscrit language by the remarkable and venerable name: "manudsha," which has been preserved to this day in English and German as in Gothic "Maniska" high German "Mensch," English "man," and in similar expressions in all kindred dialects.

This word can be traced back with very good reason, as Tacitus has already attested, to a mythical ancestor by the name of Manna, or Manus, an Indian king, the root of which is "man," signifying "to think." Man is so called, not because he thinks but because he thinks and speaks; and because he thinks, this very close connection between his faculty to think and to speak, signifies to us the cause and origin of his language.

The animals do not speak; because they do not think.

The child begins to talk, as soon as he commences to

think and his speech is like his thought, not additive, but multiplicative. Men with profoundest ideas, philosophers, poets and orators have the greatest power of speech.

Ideas and speech are our own property. Upon both depends the freedom of our nature; *Sentire quae velis et quae sentias dicere*, you think whatever you please and speak whatever you think.

Without that liberty, we would have been like beasts, subject merely to necessity; but by means of it, we gain salvation.

The diversity of languages throughout the world is by no means a confusion of tongues tending to isolate humanity but is rather a significant illustration of an early trend of the primitive races to multiply, quicken and broaden the turn of the human mind in order to promote the most beneficent purposes of humanity.

It was a natural evolution, wholesome, and therefore necessary.

It would lead us too far to present to you the different periods during which the primitive languages developed themselves. Suffice it to say, that our language is our history.

As the foundation of an empire or a people was laid by a few families, who united themselves, assumed common manners, usages and customs, and leagued to act and to enlarge the extent of their country, exactly so did a custom found a first action, from which all others subsequently proceeded and to which they referred.

The duration of association produces a great many changes. The term "paradisical," denoting that nothing

requisite is wanting, cannot be applied to the state of language during the first period, because it had to pass through a vegetative life, in which many spiritual faculties were still slumbering, or were but half awakened.

In the beginning, language was simple, artless, full of life, like the blood that has a quick circulation in the juvenile body. All the words were short, consisting of one syllable, and were mostly formed by short vowels and simple consonants.

The supply of terms came forth quickly and closely, like blades of grass. Thus for instance, Arabic has fifty words for lion, two hundred for snake, eighty for honey, four hundred for misery, over a thousand for sword, etc. The Siamese express the pronouns of "I" and "We" in eight different ways, according as the master speaks to the servant, or the servant to the master.

All ideas proceeded from a sensual unobscured perception, which was already an idea in itself and out of which easily arose, in every direction, new ideas. Innumerable seeds fell into the soil which prepared the second period. Through all this the laws of the sounds increased and were disclosed magnificently.

But as the whole nature of man, and hence also his speech, are continually soaring aloft, the law of this second period of development of language could not suffice for all time, but had to give way to the striving for a still greater liberty of thought.

None, among all modern languages, says Professor Grimm, has received, by rejecting and deranging ancient laws of sounds and abrogating nearly all inflections, a

greater power and strength than the English language. On the plenitude of its free, middle sounds, that are not instructible but may be learned, a substantial force of expression was made dependent, such as perhaps no other living tongue ever had at its command. Its exceedingly spiritual and astonishingly successful structure and cultivation proceeds from a surprising union of the two most noble languages of later Europe, the German and Roman. It is well known what relation they have to each other in the English.

The first furnished more the sensual ground-work, and the latter supplied the abstract ideas. The English language, that produced a Shakespeare, the incomparable dramatist, the greatest and mightiest genial poet of modern times, in opposition to the old, classical poetry, being introduced by Herder and Lessing to the German people, was taken as a model in Germany, may justly be called a language of the world and seems destined, like the English speaking people, to rule over all parts of the earth, in a much higher degree as time goes on.

This is due to the fact, that it surpasses all living languages in richness, reason and concise and terse style, and even the German language will have to shake off many infirmities before it can also boldly enter the lists.

It is beyond all doubt, that it will not take another century, before we will find numerous English schools in Judea, Japan, China and in the Cape lands, Sierra Leone, Siberia, etc. Besides those in the mother country in Europe, it educates millions of adopted children in four continents: America, Australia, Asia and Africa.

Like rivers that flow into the ocean by which they are swallowed up, just so thousands, nay, millions of men of different nations of all countries who have emigrated or are still coming to this country or go to Australia, etc., are sometimes in the first, and sometimes in the second or third generation, engulfed in the large and mighty ocean of the English tongue.

We come, therefore, to the conclusion that the beauty of human language did not flourish in the beginning, but in its middle period, and that it will present us its most precious fruit in the future.

THE SIDONIAN INSCRIPTION

TRANSLATION

V. 1. In the rainy month of the fourteenth year (III.) 13 years after I had reigned, the king Ashmunido, king of the Sidonians,

V. 2. Son of the king Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, said king Ashmunido, king of the Sidonians, as follows:—We communicate to the world,

V. 3. That my time is dwindling away; may it dissolve like the sea in vapours. When I shall be speechless, and lie in the excavation and in the grave,

V. 4. On the place which I have built. I make a vow that thou my whole empire, and everybody, shalt not open my grave;

V. 5. And the common man shall not desire it, as he does in regard to that of a common; he shall not carry away my coffin of my restingplace, and shall not raise

V. 6. The elevation of my grave, the upper part of my second resting place (double grave). And if a depraved wretch would still do it, then listen, thou reprobate: My whole empire, and every one, who will open my grave, who will take away my coffin of my resting place, and remove the elevation

V. 8. Of my grave, he shall not be deposited in a grave between the dead, and he shall not be interred in a grave,

Disinterred within a mile of the City of SIDON, on the 19th of January, 1855.

made by Dr. C. V. A. Van Dyck.

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and even his son shall not do it, and he shall have a bad destiny

V. 9. Among those who slumber in the circle of the rejoicing of the holy groves (or oaks, idols); with them is the king, the father, the chief, the governor, the son of the king of the city (*id est*, Baal).

V. 10. A contemptible end be to my empire, if there be anybody who would open the upper part of my grave, and carry away

V. 11. My coffin. O Anxitis! mark what I said: Lo! if a man of the people ventures, then may not the Lord of peace give him welfare

V. 12. Because I endeavoured to attain under thy sun all accomplishments of man in this life. We communicate to the world that my time falls off.

V. 13. O might it dissolve like the sea in vapours. When I lie speechless, I . . . I, Ashmunido, king of the Sidonians, son

V. 14. Of the king Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, a grandson of the king Ashmunido, king of the Sidonians, and my mother, a servant of Ashtoreth,

V. 15. A priest of the Ashtoreth, our mistress, the queen, the daughter of the king Amunido, king of the Sidonians, lo! we have built the house

V. 16. Of the oaks (or groves, gods), the house of judgment concerning sea matters. And we have established the temple of Ashtoreth, which the mighty have laid waste, and we are those

V. 17. Who have erected a building to the nation (to the aid of the nation). The wicked on the mount will be weak-

ened, and those places will be colonized which the mighty desolated. We are those, who have built edifices

V. 18. As the groves (or gods) of the Sidonians in Sidon, the land of the sea, a building to Baal Sidon, and a building Ashtoreth. There is Baal! And the Lord of kings may give to us for ever

V. 19. Dora and Joppe, the corn countries on the height, which were lost, and which we recovered again in the assault, to impose great tributes, and we have added to them

V. 20. The height on the boundary of the land, in order to fortify all Sidonians for ever. I make a solemn vow thou my whole empire, and everybody, shalt not open my upper part,

V. 21. And shalt not ruin my upper part, and shalt not remove the elevation of my grave, and shalt not carry away the coffin of my restingplace; to these will bow (be favourable)

V. 22. These holy oaks (or gods), and these kingdoms will be awakened (that is, vigorous and powerful), lo! and the mob shall thus be shattered for ever.

The above translation by Rabbi Isidor Kalisch was presented by Dr. Benisch at a meeting of the Syro-Egyptian Society, held in London, November 13, 1855. See pages 16, 19 for other details regarding this inscription.

This translation was afterwards compared with others made by Dr. F. E. C. Dietrich, of Marburg, by the Duc de Luynes in Paris, and by William W. Turner, and by E. E. S., in the Journal of the American Oriental Society.

Archdeacon Raymond observed upon the slight discrepancies exhibited by these different translations and he re-

marked that we had succeeded in deciphering in the present day that which had already in the time of Homer been given up as a lost language.

Mr. Hogg gave an account of the efforts which he had made as foreign secretary to the Royal Society of Literature to secure this valuable monument to the British Museum, but which had not been attended with success.

The Sarcophagus bearing this inscription which Rabbi Kalisch had successfully deciphered stands in the Assyrian chamber in a conspicuous place in the Louvre.

BROTHERLY LOVE *

THE FIRST AND MAIN PRINCIPLE OF JUDAISM

"One and the same precept and one and the same law shall be for you, and for the stranger, that sojourns with you."

Num. xv. 16.

All kind and gracious Being! Teach us to remember all the benefactions which in this day thou hast bestowed upon us. Let thy spirit and thy wisdom reign over our souls, that we may strive to the perfection and glorification of ourselves. O, original source of all grace and mercy! Thou, who delivered our forefathers from Egyptian bondage and insufferable tyranny. O kind Redeemer of Israel, deliver us from the tyrants of our life, from hatred, envy, discord, slander, and all such propensities of the human heart, which put in slavish chains our mind and spirit. Father, who faithfully watches over all thy creatures, look down upon us from the celestial heights, and enlighten our mind, that we may by this day understand, that the practice of brotherly love is the principal element of religion, the very basis of the prosperity of the whole life! Amen.

When we look back in the history of our ancestors, we are overcome with delight mingled with serious reflections; for in that obscure heathen antiquity, where the whole mankind laid in the cradle of childhood, where wickedness and

* A sermon preached on Passover, 1855, at Tifereth Israel Synagogue, Cleveland, O. Published in the "Israelite," vol. I, Nos. 42, 44, 46.

cruelty were in course, where sensuality sat enthroned and prescribed laws to the human race, where occurrences of barbarity, the very thought of which at the present day fills us with terror and shuddering, although our nation sighed under the yoke of Egyptian despotism, although it endured fearful afflictions, we find it, however, illuminating with splendor and glory, the light of which still shines upon us with that brightness emanating from divine love and mercy. The history of the sufferings of our forefathers, if not repeated in this happy land, in this asylum of freedom, in this Palestine of all nations, it is in other parts of the earth, in many states of the Old World; and if repeated, yet there again appears to us the sun of the divine love and breaks through the clouds and tempests, which heap up over our heads, and sends to us beams of hope and aid. Our holy patriarch Abraham pointed to this in his prophetic spirit, when he made his covenant with God. We read (Gen. xv. 10), "He took all these and divided them in the midst." The beasts which Abraham took, as the Talmud truly remarks, were symbols of the oppressors of Israel. "He laid then one piece against another." Herewith he intended to signify the repetition of all painful calamities which shall befall them: "The birds he did not divide."

They consisted of a turtledove and a pigeon which being the most innocent and loving animals thereby representing the goodness of the Almighty, which indissolubly rules over us in all our circumstances. Whereas the love of the Supreme Being, which shall still fall to our lot, had particularly proved by the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, there-

fore the Passover was commanded to us in memory of it. This feast is solemnized not because God has performed many marvellous wonders; for, if this were the case, every day of our life should be a holy day; because his miracles are of daily and hourly occurrence. For instance, all know the soul has an influence over the body, but who can show us the natural reason? So operate the faculties round about and out of us, and who can sufficiently explain them? Nay, by every step and every look around, we perceive the wonders of the Almighty. Or is the mechanism of the human body, or of the smallest animal not still as miraculous as the division of the Red Sea? Certainly we are habituated to such and similar wonders; but all this does not diminish them. Therefore it is written in Deut. xvi. 3, "That you may remember the day when you came forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life," and it is not said, "That you may remember the wonders, which I did on the day when you went forth out of the land of Egypt," for the divine miracles have not yet ceased. They still happen everywhere, things which stir up the most incomprehensible astonishment and admiration. Thus the Passover shall not remind us of the miracles, but of the extraordinary favor with which the Lord has made us happy. Therefore it is written in the commandments, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage," and is it not said: "I am the Lord your God, who did great wonders, or who created heaven and earth;" for the omnipotence alone would not be a sufficient reason for the love and veneration of God. On the contrary the distinguished goodness which the heavenly father bestowed

upon us especially by the departure from Egypt demands our undivided awe and love to him. We have then enjoyed the grace and mercy of God in the highest manner by taking into consideration that this is stressed with the greatest emphasis on every page of the Holy Scriptures. What an important lesson can we conceive from this for our conduct!

To this eager inquiry, my beloved hearers, I pray, turn your reflections. I quote verses 9, 10 and 11 of the 80th Psalm as a basis of our discussion, "A vine, O God, didst Thou remove out of Egypt, Thou drovest out nations and plantedst it. Thou didst clean out a place before it, that it struck its root deeply and filled the land. Mountains were covered with its shadow and its boughs were like mighty cedars. It sent out its tendrils as far as the sea and into the river its suckers."

The principal commandment of our religion as of our nature in general is sincere love. What, brethren, said once our honorable teacher Hillel to a heathen, who wanted to become acquainted with the principles of our holy Torah in one moment? Did he tell him perhaps of abundant days of fasting and praying? Did he tell him perhaps of exercise of frequent ceremonies? No, dear brethren! But he said with biblical words, short, simple, true and sublime: "Love your fellow creatures as yourself." This is said generally without difference of religion and rank; for we read so explicitly in Lev. xix, 34, "As a fellow-citizen shall be unto you, the stranger that sojourns with you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God." That is to say: "I, said

the Lord, who am so righteous, so benevolent, so mild and merciful toward you, require of you, that you may do this toward all even other believers." This brotherly love, said Hillel, is the basis and the kernel of our holy religion, or as the Talmud in Baba Bathra, 9, aptly remarks, "Rabbi Asai taught: 'Active love of our fellow-creature exceeds all other divine commandments put together.'"

And, indeed, it is so; for who loves sincerely his fellow-creatures, on whom the features of the Father of the Universe shine, supports him and feels with him his enjoyments and troubles, and takes part brotherly, he will gain in the best manner the mercy of God and he will find before the Eternal the greatest satisfaction. As we read in the Proverbs of Solomon, xxi. 3, "To exercise brotherly love and justice, is more acceptable to the Lord, than any other sacrifice." Suppose we should build a temple of the finest and costliest marble, ornamented in the richest style of art, decorated and adorned with all the grandeur and splendor, that wealth and genius could devise, and enter there without making first our heart like unto a temple of the Almighty, and without professing the ardent zeal for the advancement of human happiness, and the most simple one would proclaim with the words of the wise king Solomon, (I. Kings viii., 27.): "And in truth will God then dwell among men on the earth? Behold, the heavens and the heavens of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less then this house, that I have built!" But if we enter the house of God, and bring with us compassion and mercy towards our brothers and sisters as sacrifices, these will surpass a whole universe in esteem and beauty. This would be a praise

of God, which would delight Him far more than the melodious songs of the best *chazan*, and the oldest and sublimest prayers; because the worshipping of the Heavenly Father, when allied to a godly life of striving and action can only be named a true adoration. As we read in the 89th Psalm, 15 and 16, "Happy is the people that love as a jubilation, O Lord, to walk in the light of thy face," "Who will rejoice daily in thy name, and who will find their nobility in thy righteousness." Therefore the Talmud remarks, Treatise Taanith, 20, "Always be the man flexible as a reed, and not hard as a cedar." The meaning of it is, every human being shall have an understanding heart to diminish the troubles of his fellow-creatures, and make their lives happy and pleasant. For even therein has God given us to understand distinctly His will, that we all have equal rights to the gifts of fortune of the earth, since he gave to all equal emotions and feelings. But would any one ask, why does not the Eternal give to all men here below sufficiently? Does God like the poor less, or is He perhaps not powerful enough to satisfy the necessities of mankind? Nay! such a being, that has created innumerable worlds out of nothing, would be able, if He should find it good, to assign every man a whole earth alone, in order to exile entirely the torment with all its plagues. As God did not do it, by that appears, that the distinction of ranks laid in His wise plan of creation, and, indeed, shall be given to us an opportunity through that to perform deeds of love and generosity, and to represent the image of God consisting only and solely in greatness of mind and sympathy. The Psalmist compares, therefore, likening the Israelites to a vine, when he says, "A

vine, O God, didst thou remove out of Egypt." Just as a vine exists for the sake of its delicious fruit, so are we, as Israelites and men, created only to be charitable. And as the fruit of the vine delights the heart of the man, shall all our actions gladden the heart of our fellow-creatures. As benevolent we must make then our appearance there, where the humble poor weeps in the midst of the helpless family; benevolent, where industrious and virtuous people, in spite of their exertions are heavily burdened, and deeply depressed by disaster, distress, and affliction. Therefore only were our forefathers redeemed out of the slavery of Egypt, for that reason only God will help us out of unfortunate accidents, and turn away from us all troubles, all vexations and losses, on that account has God called us into existence, and through that we will acquire the kingdom of heaven, as we read in the "Sayings of the Fathers," section 3, precept 13, "Every one, who is devoted to the spirit of humanity," that is, to say, whom philanthropy penetrates, to him is the godly spirit likewise favorable, or as the Psalmist says, "I will behold, O Lord, thy face through my righteous conduct, and I will be delighted, when I awake from the sleep of death in contemplating thy likeness," or as we read in the Proverbs of Solomon, xxi., "He that pursues the love of mankind will find true life, happiness and honor;" for humanity, my beloved hearers, is the highest aim and destination of the human race.

If we accomplish this high scope, it shall be for us also a fountain full of bliss and joy, and how it will be so, we find in the following reflections. Every one of us has by experience learned that nobody is completely contented with

his situation, if it would be ever so prosperous and afforded him even so much pleasure. The crown ornamented with the richest jewels oppresses the king sitting on the throne, often even as heavy as a burden which with panting, afflicts old age, and bends his form down to the earth. But what is the reason of this perpetual longing for better days, of this constant endeavor for the improvements of temporal circumstances, of this restless zeal for striving at greater prosperity, what is the reason of the murmur and the displeasure of the man in himself? Nothing else but that nobody in his imagination and desire could live cheerfully enough, would he be ever so happy.

But, if we consider the matter closer, there comes from thence by many people through superfluity and intemperate enjoyment; by others through perpetual desires to possess now even such great treasures and riches, rather than even such admirable abilities, than even such fame, such enjoyments, such promising children, as they observe among their fellow-creatures; and others again for imaginary want of all enjoyments of life. Some, they are the richest and most wealthy, are like a drunkard, who is not gratified with the best drinks in his inebriation; and others, they are not the rich, to whom the world is a vale of misery, a dark misty forest full of thorns, a miserable beggarly prison, are like a beast of burden which bears on his back a barrel full of good wine, and drinks however, dirty water; or they are like a man who perishes with thirst, who does not see in night dark and black as a raven the dripping spring nearby; for they do not understand the use of the treasures of all cheerfulness which cannot be surpassed; the jewel which

makes prosperous, what the poorest man can possess, namely brotherly love.

But besides these principal evils, desires for full and perfect enjoyments, headlong craving for more and more great fortunes, and ignorance of the true pleasures of life, still there are some which we produce to ourselves, and which besiege our heart with most horrible plagues, and fall upon our happy days with wrathful teeth like a tiger, namely the bad propensity, this ambushade which does harm, as the Talmud aptly remarks in *Succa* 52a: "The prophet Joel called the bad instinct the ambush, because he always lays snares in the human heart." Envy, although the most foolish of sins which man can commit, since it yields profit not at all, undermines our repose, destroys all our animal spirits, it is, however, an inhabitant of the heart. Covetousness, the mother of all vices; slander, the daughter of frivolity and self-conceit; and hatred, the destroyer of ourselves and of those which is met with it, together with its horrible train.

We can ask indeed with the wise king Solomon, *Proverbs* xix., "The folly of a man perverteth his way; and against the Lord will he rage?" And with the destiny of God, with his fate, will he not be contented? But is there no remedy for such human folly? Is there nowhere upon the earth true joy and prosperity? Every being enjoys his existence, but man, the image of God, the most excellent work and the crown of the whole creation, should he go about upon the earth under a glorious sun joyless, sad and mournful? God, who took the best care of all our corporeal necessities, who created for every poison antidotes. He certainly reflected

upon all the deficiencies and aberrations of our mind. Herein gives us the inspired Isaiah a prophetic advice, if he says, "No, every one who thirsts may come to the water, and he too that has no money may come buy and eat." The expression "water" that is used here is a symbol of the law of God. Why the water particularly symbolizes our holy law, that is very easy to comprehend, if we take into consideration that the love of God is like the water, without any shape and form, and can therefore assume all models, as the ingenious author in his book *Cosny* says, "The water is a symbol for the prime matter, wherefrom all things were formed, since it contains all possible shapes."

We find in the divine law not only comfort and instruction for all the vicissitudes and necessities of our life, which also like the water quenches the thirst of all men without exception of person, rank or character, and includes a common remedy for the most various misfortunes of all degrees and stations.

The main principle, however, which we shall draw out of the spring of light, of our religion, is, as I have already shown, the active brotherly love. If we act now according to this godly rule, we perceive in the exercise of that, an inexhaustible enjoyment, a cloudless delight, a happiness upon the earth. As the inspired Psalmist says, "Depart from evil, that is to say, shut up thy heart before the passions, and do good, further the welfare and pursue it;" or as it is said in our text, "Thou drovest out the heathen and plantest it." Have you eradicated from your heart heathenism with its idols, have you subdued the passions and propensities, that dwell there, and planted in their stead phi-

lanthropy, have you cleared out a place before it, that it took root, and filled your intrinsic land, the land of your heart, has it covered all heights with shadows, that is to say, has it placed all charms of sense in shadows, these general heights of life, "and the boughs are like mighty cedars," and the works of love reach unto sun's altitude of cloudless joy and serenity? For the view of beauty and nobleness, the consciousness to have pacified the tears of the poor and unfortunate people through advice and action, to have assisted truly a helpless brother who was about to sink down, to have supported a hopeful and ingenious but a poor man, and to have founded in general the welfare of many, and no sentiments would make us more happy upon the earth, and no feelings would grant us such indestructible and permanent enjoyments.

Brethren! Philanthropy is then the benefactress of the world, being the fountain of all delights which flows to all alike plentifully, to the high and to the low, to the rich and to the poor, to the educated and to the ignorant; because we have not only the use of the pleasures which it produces for ourselves, but we enjoy also in our mind all the happiness of others. Just as the sunshine gives joy to every heart, charms the fortune, genius, science and honor of our fellow-creatures in the highest degree. If we strive now to have a true philanthropical heart and we make this the highest aim of our life, we are then in possession of all the blessings and desirable things, of the greatest satisfaction, and consequently of all the happiness upon the earth.

The love of mankind makes us, however, not alone the happiest beings, but it is also the fountain of the greatness

and dignity of men. Without this quality man would be a prey of many hostile elements, he would be the most tormented and at the same time the worst creature upon the earth, a living history of misfortunes. For, where brotherly love does not prevail, there is no progress of the accomplishment of the heart, and consequently would not be any moderation of barbarous and heathenish manners. Calamity, blindness, faults and darkness, would act without shame, and every day not sufficient enough that it has its own plagues, would be changed entirely into night, through malice, hatred, mortification and ill humors. He who is destitute of love, whose soul is like a tempestuous and raging sea, its hurricane is the selfishness, and the virtues and the moral life are the wrecked vessels, and where these do not exist, a happy existence is impossible. On the contrary, benevolence and kindness towards every one lead to self-preservation, this principal fountain of all human magnanimity, for this quality establishes moral freedom and strengthens our independence of all sensuality. Our body will then be an instrument of our soul and not the soul a servant of the dust. Herein lies the principal preference of the human being, although we admit that the animal has a certain degree of intelligence; herein lies our resemblance with God, as the Psalmist says: "Thou hast made him but a little less than angels." A man with a temper of mind full of benevolence is as though he were the guardian angel of his brethren; because such a one cannot see unmoved the tears of the unfortunate, he cannot see the figure of calamity without emotions of sympathy, nay, such a man is busy to save him who stands at depravity's door, through

friendly anxious countenance and through tender and apprehensive soul-subduing voice. The philanthropist becomes then the redeemer, or more properly the creator and preserver of the soul of his fellow-creatures. This virtue of liberality and kindness, this perfection, this nobility of mind, this crown of mankind, is the highest and most worthy thing that a man can profess upon the earth. It is written, therefore, in the rabbinical ethics very truly and strikingly: "On three things rests the world, upon the holy law, worship and charity." According to the Talmudic maxim, "that the most important is cited last," is also charity, which is here mentioned as the last word of the most importance of the indicated three pillars of the happiness of mankind. And though we read the Talmudic Treatise Peah: "The following objects grant to men fruits in this world, and remain as capital in a future world: they are: piety towards the parents, charity, etc., 'and study of the law exceed all other actions'; and consequently is this last one, as the highest moral deed particularly mentioned."

This is, however, but an apparent contradiction. For in Treatise Peah reference is made to the supremacy of the study of the Holy Scriptures. Thus it gives the study of the holy law an immediate utility upon the earth. By every step we can give blessings of the greatest magnitude through a right application of it. Yet charity, it is true, finds its reward in itself, and the Omniscient, the rewarder of all good actions, will remunerate them with paradisiacal delights; but alas, how often it will be misrepresented here below? The philanthropist is very often accused of heresy,

hypocrisy and fraud, and is hated and persecuted by bigoted, superstitious and vain men. If one speaks of moral actions which give us often advantages, bring luck, and remunerate us with the greatest reward upon the earth, then they must, indeed, be identified with the broadest meaning of the word, as transcending all; because it civilizes the world, and true happiness is the daughter of civilization. But if it is spoken about virtues, as it is done in the rabbinical ethics, whereby human society in general or any state of duration, must be designed by philanthropy as our sages have done; because she is the mother of all social welfare. On account of this high importance of brotherly love, it is taught, recommended and repeated very often and almost by every law and precept in the Bible. We read then: "Have compassion with the widows and orphans, love the strangers, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and even if your enemy is in need, help him, and if he feels hungry give him to eat." (Ex. xxiii., 4, 5, Proverbs xxv., 21, etc.) Has any one injured, hated and abused you without a reasonable motive, the Pentateuch commands you several times: "You shall not avenge nor bear any malice, but shall indeed rebuke your brother." Therefore, brethren, you may strive indefatigably to make benevolence your own; for it is the culmination of all morals, the diamond ornament of our life. It is the wonderful plant, as it is said in our text: "It sent out its tendrils as far as the sea of eternity and into the river of life its suckers." Although we hear that many say that love and benevolence should first be shown to ourselves, and similar expressions, such phrases are the effluxions of selfishness and

of a very low manner of thinking; because by acting so, we degrade ourselves to senseless animals. For instance, the bird in his nest does the same, he feeds his young ones and nurses them, and even the cruel tiger in the wild forest has mercy with his young. Yet not to do good, if it is in our power to perform it, and to give merely excuses, is not alone degrading for him who gives it but very foolish. For have you ever heard, brethren, that anybody shuffles, if he only thinks to gain a great advantage? And is the practice of benefaction any thing else but to get a treasure, whose value is not computable? Is it anything else but to get a treasure, which is to be hoarded up and deposited in the best place of safety for ourselves? As we read also in Isaiah, lviii., 8, "If before you will go active love, then the glory of your Lord shall be once your reward."

Brethren! Through good actions we can further found not only our own greatness and dignity, but we can also become the lever of mankind; for, if we look into the history of the world, or by looking around the diurnal scenes, we find that all great men are owing their subsistence, knowledge, nay, sometimes the preservation of life to the generosity, bounty and favor of their fellow-creatures, men who are the blessings of many generations, nay, who created the welfare of humanity. To cite here but one instance, I will only mention that the great Prophet Moses, the inspired messenger and redeemer of our forefathers, owed the preservation of his life and his education, next to God, to the mildness and kindness of a heathen princess. Great and ineffably important and blissful are then often the results of some little protections, and, therefore, we may take to

the heart the words of the wise King Solomon: "Say not unto your acquaintance go and return, and to-morrow will I give, when you have it with you," for this would be an answer to disengage from pitiful subjects, without having really the intention to succour them who look for assistance. Suppose now such an answer were in good earnest, would the benefaction then suffer a loss as soon as it will be delayed; for a little support in time is often more useful than by main strength out of time. We must then aid all afflicted who lay claim to our help immediately and without delay, even though we were full of enjoyment of the best amusements, otherwise we would be like an emmet to which King Solomon sends but the lazy and idle, that he may learn at least to gather and to use anything for himself. We must be rather with our diligence, activity and wealth like a bee, which does not only sting men, but piles also treasures for men. For a day will come when money will not be weighed, but the employment of it. Not the cheerful but the efficacious days. How blessed and how charming will it be for us. Would we lay greater weight in the scale of recompense. Yet if we are willing to give the highest value to all our good actions, whereby they will receive the greatest gravity, we must observe the right manner, how we must perform them. This we learn to do, however, if we look into our text. We read there: "A vine, O God, didst thou remove out of Egypt." Now at what time did the Almighty lead the Israelites out of the land of slavery? When has God caused the Red Sea to be frozen through a tumultuous tempest of the East, that our forefathers could dry-shod pass over? It was at night, breth-

ren, where darkness veiled the earth. Where did the Almighty give us the greatest gift which we possess, I mean by it the holy Torah? Was it a populous place? No, in a desert, separated from the great world. And do you know why all these came to pass so? Because, God, the invisible benefactor, did wish, that we may act like him. As he did show us the highest mercy and favor silently, we shall also do all our good actions secretly without boast. This is the right way of doing good; for, if we make great bustle about our liberality, we do it then for the sake of our own interest and not for the sake of the poor and needy, and consequently would be forlorn all value of it. Brethren, let us now exercise philanthropy, which is so often and so clearly expressed in our religion; as our sages truly remarked in Treatise Sota 13b: "The commencement of the holy law is to perform benevolent actions, and the conclusion of it is one and the same."

Let us make this precept to the highest desire and aim of our life, which is soon the fountain of all the happiness here below, and the love and the endless mercy of the Almighty, whereon the feast of this day especially reminds, will further fall to our share with the same distinction and we would be happy in this world as in eternity. Amen!

LEESER'S TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE *

The author of the new translation of the Bible presents us in form and contents an eclectic work. He is satisfied with the exegetical investigations of the German scholars, which he adopted in lieu of the ancient commentators, and is of the opinion that the style and manner of expression of the common English Version which he has also copied for the most part—are a *ne plus ultra* in this field. The merit must, indeed, be granted to the author that he endeavors to diffuse in this country the knowledge of others, as Dr. Jost properly remarks of him, we will only investigate how far he succeeded to solve his problem. In regard to the exterior, we deem the words on the title-page “The Twenty-Four Books of the Holy Scriptures” incorrect. Only a Christian who considers the New Testament as holy, should express himself as the author has done, because the twenty-four books are to the former but a part of Scripture. The Israelite, however, who only and solely has twenty-four sacred books can but say, “The Twenty-Four Sacred Books,” or “The Holy Scripture.” Again I have read with the greatest astonishment the words: “Carefully translated according, etc., on the basis of the English version;” and much more I was surprised by the author’s view on the Bible version of King James. He says, “As regards the style it has been endeavored to adhere closely to that of the ordinary English version which for simplicity cannot

* Reprinted from the “Israelite,” i, Nos. 3, 8, 22.

be surpassed," etc. Against this extraordinary assertion with respect to the common English version, I will merely quote Dr. A. Campbell's observations, which he made in 1826. He said,

"A living language is continually changing. Like the fashions and customs in apparel, words and phrases at one time current and fashionable, in the lapse of time become awkward and obsolete. Many of them in a century, or two, come to have a signification very different from that which was once attached to them. Nay, some are known to convey ideas not only different from, but contrary to their first signification," etc.

Dr. Campbell says further,

"Now although many alterations in orthography, punctuation, and in marginal readings have been made on the King's translation, so that the first edition of it differs in many respects from the modern, yet the style is still preserved; and from its old-fashioned peculiarities, it is called the sacred style. I know it may be said that the style of the King's translation is still more ancient than the era of his reign, etc., so that many peculiarities in the obsolete style of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are to be found in the common version, etc. This style we have avoided in the present edition, and have, as far as was practicable in one effort, removed from the sacred writings the obsolete verily, ye, unto, liveth, keepeth, heareth, doth, hath, thou, thee, thy; and all their kindred terms and phrases of the same antiquity. They have yielded their places to another race in all our writings and speeches, except in the pulpit or Synagogue—why not also in the sacred writings? We might as reasonably contend that men should appear in the public assemblies for worship with long beards, in Jewish or Roman garments, as that the Scriptures should be handed to us in a style perfectly antiquated, and consequently less intelligible."

It becomes evident from the words of Dr. Campbell that his translation of the Bible is antiquated as regards style!

We will now examine, whether the contents, as we are led to believe in the preface to Leeser's translation, present us the quintessence of all exegetical labors of our age.

Gen. i. 11. The author translates this passage. "Let the earth bring forth grass." For aught it seems, the author has such a predilection for the work of the translators of King James I., that he even copied mistakes which were well known to be such to him. In my "Exegetical Lectures on the Bible," published in the *Occident* of December 1851, I have translated Gen. i. 11, "Let the earth bring forth all sorts of vegetable," or literally, "Let the earth sprout sprouts." To this Mr. Leeser remarked in a note, "The author views דשא not to mean grass, but everything which is green, and this corresponds with the verb הדרשא and he is no doubt right," why did he not prefer the right to the wrong translation?

Ibid. ii. 18. "I will make him a help suitable for him."

The word נגד "Neged" in the sense of "suitable" is found nowhere, and therefore cannot be rendered so. Aside of the rendering of this word being arbitrary, the translation is also, therefore, inadmissible, because being a pleonasm. For how can a person be called עזר "Ezer" a "help," if not being suitable? And besides this, the כ (Kaph) would be altogether superfluous? According to my opinion the verse must be rendered so, The 'Kaph' of the word 'Keneged' כנגד is what grammarians call 'Kaph veritatis' (quite similar to the ב 'Beth essentiae') and signifies 'as'; the word נגד "Neged" signifies 'a side,' as Genesis xxxiii. 12, etc. Whereas it is said in the first part of the verse, "It is not good, that man should be alone," God said then in the last part, "I will make him a help, as one who is always on his side."

Ibid. vi., 3. "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not strive for the sake of man for that he is but flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." The author quoted in a note different interpretations of this difficult verse, but the only right and old explanation escaped his notice. It is incomprehensible to us, why the author admitted the false explanation of the translators of King James I. in the last part of the verse, and not the true interpretation of Onkelos, Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Mendelssohn as he himself mentioned them. How it is possible that the hundred and twenty years which are mentioned in the verse should mean the longest period of a man's life on earth, if it is related in the next chapters, that many generations after Noah attained a much higher age? (See Gen. x. 1-32. *ibid.* 25, 17, etc.) Besides it is established by experience, that most men live scarcely seventy years, and very few reach a hundred and a person who lives hundred and twenty, or hundred and thirty years is only an exception to the rule. The period of hundred and twenty years which is mentioned in this verse, is then only the time, as Onkelos and others asserted, which God granted to the sinful generation to repent their sins and to improve their morals, and if this time should not be applied to this purpose, they should be destroyed by the deluge. According to the opinion of an old grammarian, whom Ibn Ezra in his book שפת יתן page 17, mentioned, the verb ידון has the same root and meaning as נדן, "Sheath," "Ruach," signifying anger or displeasure.

The literal translation would be, "My anger shall not rest forever in the sheath in regard to man. Yet he is but

flesh, I respite him hundred and twenty years." I must add to this, that we find a similar phrase in Dan. vii. 15.

Ibid. vi. 17. "And as regard myself behold, I will bring," etc.

The three words, "as regard myself," are not at all in the text. It could be given accurately and more briefly than it is done in the common English version, "For behold I even I will bring." Just so are *ibid.* vi. 21, the three words, "for thy part," superfluous. Translating signifies not to render the words of one language through similar expressions in another, but it is the task of a good translator to render exactly and accurately the words and meaning of the original, assisted by a profound knowledge of both languages, their peculiarities, idioms and spirit, whereby at the same time the peculiar character in the whole diction and expression, as far as possible, is maintained.

Ibid. vii. 2 "And of beasts that are not clean, two pair." *Ibid.* vii. 9. "Two pair of each went in unto Noah into the ark." *Ibid.* vii. 15. "And they went unto Noah into the ark two pair of each."

To this the author remarks in a note:

"Meaning *at least two* not excluding the remainder of the seven ordered pair of certain kinds." This note is nearly a verbal translation of an observation of Rashi, *ibid.* vi. 19., whose name the author has not mentioned. The author, however, misunderstood this passage. Rashi said, מן הפחות שבהם לא פחתו משנים א' זכר ואחד נקבה. "At least were two of them (not as Mr. Leeser thinks two pair, but two individuals, because Rashi adds) one male and one female."

I propose to prove that שנים "Sh'naim" signifies not two pair, but only two individuals, and שנים שנים must be translated "two by two."

(1) If the word שנים should be understood "two pair," then *ibid.* vii. 8 and 9, would contain an evident contradiction to *ibid.* 2; for it is said there, that Noah took seven pair of the clean beasts; how then, could it be said in verse 8 and 9, that two pair came to Noah into the ark? But it is correct, if we translate "Sh'naim Sh'naim" "two by two" came to Noah into the ark. (2) If the word שנים signifies two pair, the words "male and female" in verse 10 would be superfluous; for that is a matter of course, if "Sh'naim" signifies two pair, that each pair consists of male and female. But if שנים signifies two individuals then was the further explanation of male and female necessary. (3) There is no cause why God should command Noah to take two pair of unclean beasts; the propagation of their kind, the only motive given for it, could be effected just as well through one pair.

Gen. ix, 6. The author remarks in a note to this verse: "The Noachitic commandments are according to the Talmud: 1st, The exercise of justice; 2nd, The worship of God or the prohibition of blasphemy; 3rd, The prohibition of idolatry; 4th, The prohibition of incest; 5th, The prohibition of murder; 6th, The prohibition of theft; 7th, The prohibition of eating the flesh of a live animal." It seems to me that the Talmud is unknown to the author, and that he has taken the tenor of this note from a second source flowing not very clearly; for in Sanhedrin, fol. 56. and Midrash Rabba Gen. xvii. and Deut. iv. is the second Noachitic

commandment **ברכת השם** explicitly explained not as the author says: "worship of God," but only **חלול השם** "prohibition of blasphemy." The sixth commandment: "the prohibition of theft," is not to be found in the Talmud. We find in the place of it: "the prohibition of robbery." Besides this the rabbis are of different opinions about the identity of the Noachitic commandments or laws for gentiles and of which the number is differently given.

Ibid. xii. 1. "Get thee out of thy country and out of thy birth-place."

It is incomprehensible to me why the author, who has for the most part used the translation of Mr. Arnheim, has not done so here too? **מולדת** can by no means be translated here "birth-place;" because Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldeans, and not in Charan, where he now sojourned. **מולדת** must be translated "relation," as Mr. Arnheim did. (Compare Esther viii. 7. and Ez. xvi. etc.)

Ibid. 13. "And my soul live because of thee."

Mr. Leeser has also here copied the common English version; but to translate the word **נפש** "soul" in this phrase is very incorrect. For everybody would admit that Abraham, the father of all true religion, knew the doctrine of immortality, this main principle of a right faith; how could he entreat his wife Sarah to allege to be his sister, that his soul might live? Did he think that his soul would die, if he should be killed? It is evident therefore that **נפש** cannot be rendered "soul," but "life" or "person," and **חיתה** not "live," but "preserve," namely: "that my life (or person) may be preserved." In this sense we find this phrase

very often in the Bible, rendered so by the most learned translators.

Ibid. xiv. 20. "Who hath delivered thy enemies into thy hand."

It is true, that מן is by most translators rendered "delivered." This is, however, not a verbal translation, but only according to the meaning of it. The word מן is a *Denominativum*, and signifies as much as the *Denominativa* of the conjugation פעל a removal of that which the noun denotes. Magen מן is shield, shelter, the verb of it in the conjugation piel means: "to remove the shield." A verbal translation of this passage would be: "who has disarmed thy enemies through thy hands."

Ibid. xv. 2. "What wilt thou give me seeing that I go childless."

מה is rendered here "what"; but this is incorrect, because Abraham did not ask, *what* he *should*, but *to what purpose* he shall get it. It must be translated as Mendelssohn has correctly rendered "wherefore." The two words "seeing that" are superfluous, and added.

Ibid. xix. 16. "Because the Lord desired to spare him."

None of these words are in the text, and had it been it would be superfluous; for if the angels came to bring him and his family out of danger, it is a matter of course, that God would save them. It is not related in the text, that God desired their deliverance, because this can be presumed from the whole communication, but it is given as the cause of the godly preservation of Lot and his family. Therefore it must be translated as the most eminent translators have done: "The Lord being merciful to him."

Ibid. xxi. 1. "And the Lord visited Sarah."

פָּקַד does not signify "visit" but "remember," etc.

Ibid. xxii. 12. "Seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son."

"Seeing that" are not in the text, and should be rather given with the word "because."

Ibid. xxii. 13. "And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him, was a ram caught," etc.

This translation which the author has copied literally from the common English version, is incorrect altogether. 1st, The meaning of the words וישא עיניו וירא is, "He lifted up his eyes and looked up, or forward," if he looked forward how could he see the ram which was standing behind him? 2nd, To avoid this difficulty we translate וירא "looked around" (what Mr. Leeser did not), but there is another difficulty that איל and אחר have two distinctive accents, and after all must not stand אחר but אחריו. The only right translation is the one of Mendelssohn: "Behold, there was a ram afterwards being caught in a thicket by his horns, Abraham went, took the ram," etc.

Ibid. xxvi. 17. "Seeing that."

These words are not in the text.

Ibid. xxviii. 11. "And put it for his pillow," and *ibid.* 18. "And took the stone, that he had put for his pillow."

We find nowhere in the Hebrew, that מראשת signifies "pillow." It follows irrefutably from I Sam., xxvi, 7, 11 and 12, that מראשת means "by the head side," and 11 must be rendered here also: "And put it by his head side," and 18 "And he took the stone, that he had put by

his head." In the same sense Rashi's remarks run in an observation to verse 11.

Ibid. 21. Mr. Leeser translates this verse as the common English version: **יהיה ה' לי לאלהים** "Then shall the Lord be my God."

Reading these words every one would ask, should the patriarch Jacob have determined to give up the veneration of God, if all the wishes he had spoken would not be fulfilled? The author understood this well, and he gives on this account an explanatory note; but not one syllable of it is contained in the text and the whole opinion is forcibly obtained. It is incomprehensible to me, why the author has not given the right translation of Mr. Arnheim and others, who consider the words **יהיה ה' לי לאלהים** as the conclusion of Jacob's vow and render it: "And the Lord would be my titular God; then shall be this stone," etc.

Ibid. xxix. 12. "And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother and that he was Rebekah's son.

We do not know any reason, why the author has translated **הוא** "was." Was not Jacob the same relative of Laban, or the son of Rebekah at every time; therefore **הוא** must be rendered here "is."

Ibid. xxx. 27. "I have learned by experience, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake."

We find nowhere in the Hebrew language, that **נחש** should mean "by experience." It is always analogous to the English word "forebode," and it must be rendered here: "I have learned by forebodement," or, "I have foreboded." *Ibid.*, xxxi. 10. The author translates **ברורים** "grizzled." This translation which he has copied from the common

English version is not correct; because ברורים is derived from ברר "hail," and ברורים means "hail spotted," or, "white spotted."

Ibid. xxxi. 24. "Take thou heed, that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."

To this remarks Mr. Leeser: "*Id est*: Use no threats or persuasion to induce him to return to Syria." This is literally taken from S. Dubno's commentary, but the author has not mentioned it. It is, however, not sufficient to explain this phrase; because 1st, We must read too much between the lines; 2nd, The text should read טוב עד רע and מטוב; the words "either or" are expressed in Hebrew through גם-גם or, לא-לא and not through עד-מ. The meaning of this verse seems to me to be, that God admonished Laban not to speak to Jacob from the good, which he had bestowed upon him, till the bad or wrong which Jacob has done to him. The translation must therefore be: "Take you heed that you speak not to Jacob from the good to the bad."

Ibid. 31. "For I said:"

It is true אמר means very often "speak," but sometimes it signifies "think," and only in this sense it can be rendered here.

Ibid. 32. "Before thy brethren seek out."

הכר means not "seek out," but rather "confess," for instance Gen. xxxviii. 25, etc.

Ibid. xxxiv. 11. "And Shechem said unto her brother." אחיה is the plural, and must be rendered "brothers."

Ibid. xxxvi. 2. The remarks to this verse are in the

most part taken from Dubno's commentary, nevertheless the author has not mentioned his name.

Ibid. xliii. 14. "And if I am to be bereaved, let me be bereaved."

It is inexplicable, why the author left out the words "of my children," for it cannot be comprehended here in another way.

Ibid. 27. "And said, is *you* old father well."

Here is probably an *erratum*, and should be: "is your old father well."

Ibid. 34. "And they drunk and were merry with him."

שכר means nowhere "to be merry," but "get drunk."

Ibid. xliv. 7 and 17. "God forbid, that," etc.

חלילה means never "God forbid," but "it is dishonorable, disgraceful."

Ibid. 34. "I should perhaps be compelled to witness the evil which would come on my father."

To this the author remarks: "I have translated according to Onkelos." If Onkelos had translated the verse as Mr. Leeser understood him, we would reject such a translation as incorrect; because Judah could not be in doubt, whether his father would fall into despair, if he would not see again his beloved Benjamin. He saw the disconsolation of his aged father, and therefore he could not doubt a moment that Jacob would be inconsolable, if his youngest and dearest son Benjamin was lost also. But Onkelos has not rendered this verse as Mr. Leeser tells us. He says, דלמא אחזי בבשתאי די תשכח ית אבא i.e., "lest I see the misfortune which my father would have," דלמא corresponds with the Hebrew word פן and means not "perhaps," but "it would," "it

might," or "lest." So for instance translates Onkelos Gen. iii. 3. פן המותן דלמא המותן which cannot be understood in another way, but "lest you die." It is evident, that Mr. Leeser misunderstood the Chaldean version.

Gen. 49, 1. "And Jacob called unto his sons, etc., that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."

It is incorrect to render אחרית הימים "in the last days;" because the blessings which Jacob has given to his sons, are spoken in relation to their possession in the land in Canaan, at the time of Joshua and afterwards. (See in the commentary יתר הבאור, where it is proved that it cannot be otherwise understood.) The patriarch specified all the possessions of Zebulun as they were at the time of Joshua. "Acharis Hayamim" must be therefore translated "in late or in future days."

Ibid. 10. "The sceptre shall not depart, etc., until Shiloh come and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

With a deep philological investigation has my worthy friend, the editor of this paper, pointed out the many gross mistakes which the author has made in the translation of this verse. He correctly remarks: "the assertion that Jacob has given us in this verse a prophecy, is against the opinion of the Talmud." (See treatise Pesachim p. 55.) Every lover of truth must acknowledge, that the translation of this verse, given by Dr. Wise, is the most correct and the best, which was ever given by any biblical interpreter. I have only to add, as I have done already in my work *Wegweiser* pp. 279 and 280, that שילה is not a proper noun, but a collective name, and signifies peace from the root שלה. In this manner the verse was understood also by

Rabbi Saadiah Gaon (see שפת יהר by Ibn Ezra, p. 26), and even so it is rendered in the Talmud, treatise Zebachim p. 119.

The author must be the more blamed for giving such an incorrect version; because such verses which the Christian theologians intentionally interpret to suit their system, a true Israelite should render them in such a way, that they may not be misunderstood.

Ibid. 26. "With the blessings of thy father, that have excelled the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills," etc.

The translation of this verse is very incorrect. 1st, It is impossible that the meaning of the words "with the blessings, etc., that have excelled" etc., should be, that the blessing of Jacob contained more than that of Abraham and Isaac, and that he wished Joseph all these because the blessings of Jacob were the same which God had promised to Abraham and Isaac. (See Gen. xii, 2—4. xiii, 14—18. xv, 1, etc. xvii, 6—9. xxii, 17—18. xxvi, 3—5 and 24. xxvii, 28—30. xxviii, 13—15. xxxv, 11—13.) Although Rashi remarks, that the verse ופרצת יסה contains a greater blessing than that of his progenitors, it is an unfounded assertion; because the words ופרצת relate only to Palestine which God had promised to Jacob several times. 2d, If גברו signifies "excelled," it should read then מברכות or מעל ברוכה (compare Sam. 2, 1); because the comparative is formed by putting the particle מן before, or by adding מ to the comparing word. 3rd, It is impossible, that ברכות אביך etc. should be the attribute of a subject in a previous verse, which is separated by a סוף פסוק. 4th,

The words "unto the utmost bound," etc., have no reasonable connexion with the former part of the passage. It seems to me to be an עבר במקום עתיד as this is very often the case in poetical style, and signifies "increase," (see Gen. 7, 18, 19, 24) or "be mighty," (see Ps. 103, 11). על signifies "with" as it is very often to be found in the Bible in this sense. עולם denotes "ancient" as Gen. 6, 16.

According to this, the translation should be: "The blessings of thy father with the blessing of thy progenitors shall increase (or, be mighty) to the utmost bound of the ancient hills, they shall be on the head of Joseph," etc. The patriarch spoke the blessings over the possessions of the children of Joseph, which were of the most part mountainous (see Josh. xvii, 18), and compare with the contents of these verses the blessings which Moses uttered also on the tribes of Joseph (see Deut. 33, 15).

Ibid. 50, 11. . . . "At the thrashing floor at Atad."

This is an incorrect translation; for if גרן is a collective noun signifying a "thrashing floor," then it must read *ibid.* v. 12 שמו and not שמה גרן as a collective noun is masculine gender. Therefor it is evident, that גרן האמר is the name of a city or a place, as we find very often the name of a city denoted with two nouns; for instance Deut. 33. הר הגרנוד Josh. 13, 19, etc., and as a proper noun it is feminine gender and very correctly it reads *ibid.* v. 12 שמה and not שמו.

Ex. i, 9. "And he said, etc. Behold the people of the children of Israel is more numerous," etc.

Ibid. 10. "Come on, let us deal wisely with it; lest it multiply, etc., it join also unto our enemies," etc.

Ibid. 11. "And they thereupon did set over it taskmasters to afflict it, etc., and it built treasure cities," etc.

Ibid. 12. But in the measure, etc., so it multiplied, and so it spread itself out," etc.

The author, the Rev. Leeser, editor of the *Occident*, has made here not less than nine grammatical mistakes, which even a schoolboy can find out. Mr. Leeser said in his pamphlet, that he would take lessons of me in the English language. Well לכה רדני Mr. Leeser! I will tell you now, the rules of grammar which I have just studied as a tyro in the English language. Hear me with attention and do not forget them any more.

"When a collective noun conveys the idea of plurality, its verb must be plural; as, my people do not consider, they have not known me. Pronouns referring to collective nouns must in like manner be singular or plural according as the idea of unity or plurality is expressed."

Ibid. ii, 12. "And she bore her a son," etc.

It should be: "And she bore him a son," but the pronoun is superfluous altogether, because it stands not in the text. A correct translation of this verse would be: "As she bore a son, he called his name," etc.

Ibid. viii, 18. . . . "In which my people abideth," etc.

Here is again a grammatical mistake, and is only, if I dare say so, a German English. It should be "abide."

After pointing out so many mistakes in the few chapters, I cannot abstain from remarking, that I must write as thick a book as Mr. Leeser's biblical translation is, if I should point out all the gross errors and mistakes, and to do this is not worth my time, as my friend Dr. Wise has already

well remarked. Whenever I look into Leeser's biblical translation, I find mistakes in masses. For instance, Isaiah lii, 15.

"Thus will he cause many nations to jump up in (astonishment); at him will kings shut their mouth." As this passage stands here, it is perfectly nonsensical. The idea of kings shutting their mouth at a person is ridiculously absurd. The passage should read in this way: "Thus will he cause many nations to leap up; in admiration of him will kings shut their mouth."

Ibid. liii, 6. "And the Lord let befall him the guilt of us all."

This is very bad English. The passage should read: "The Lord let the guilt of us all fall (or, come) upon him."

Ibid. liii, 7. "And like a ewe before her shearers is dumb."

This is very bad English too. The adjective "like" can never be used immediately before a nominative case and its verb. Again it should read "an ewe" and not "a ewe." The whole passage should read: "As an ewe before her shearers is dumb."

SKETCH OF THE TALMUD *

"It is the essence of the Talmud which is ridiculed by those who understand it the least, and which is terribly abused in our own midst by those who hold themselves out as its sincere devotees." (Jellinek's *Sermons*, Vol. II, p. 290.)

It is my design in publishing a "Sketch of the Talmud," to recall men from prepossessed partial views, to truth.

The fate and history of the literary productions of the Jewish people in the different countries all over the habitable globe, found everywhere interpreters and expounders.

But the Talmud, which is the principal source of Judaism and is an important historical document of a period of seven hundred years, showing and explaining clearly the development and retardation of Judaism, and containing much which is of great importance to the knowledge and history of the Bible, although it still requires that the torch of criticism should throw light upon it, is very seldom used properly, or is ignored altogether. (See Geiger's "*Nachgelassene Schriften*," Vol. II, p. 127.)

Yes, it was and is often subject to the worst abuse. The governments of Italy, France, etc., influenced by priestly fanaticism, condemned the Talmud as heretical and consequently it suffered several times the martyrdom of heresy.

It requires no prophet to see that gross ignorance and misrepresentation are the real causes of it. For among millions of Jews and Christians, there are only very few who read and studied the Talmud all through, as it takes a whole life-time merely to read all the books bearing that name, and what makes it most difficult is, that although one part of it, namely, the Mishnah, is written in the Hebrew language, the second part, however, called Gemara, is composed in a style where frequently are used Chaldaic, Persian, Syriac, Greek and Latin idioms, which are written with Hebrew characters without vowels.

It is therefore no wonder that it cannot be studied by many, and

* This essay was printed in one volume, together with the author's translation of the "*Sepher Yezirah*," New York, 1877.

some know only that which they have read somewhere, quoted from another secondary source.

Having for nearly half a century devoted my time and energy to the study of the talmudical literature, I hope that I am fully prepared to give to the kind reader a true, clear and succinct "Sketch of the Talmud."

May it be as favorably received by every friend of literature and enlightenment, as many portions of it have been, when I published them some years ago in a popular Christian paper, read by tens of thousands.

The word Talmud is derived from the Hebrew verb למד (*lamod*) to learn, to teach; signifying, oral instruction, or traditional teaching, and is the title of a collection of Jewish traditions and laws.

It is called *Talmud* emphatically, as the Law of Moses is called with emphasis "תורה" "*θε νομος*" "the Law," instead of תורה משה the Law of Moses.

It contains, as Buxtorf filius (in Dedic. ad Lex. Talm.) correctly remarked, "sound theological doctrines," although, as Maimonides somewhere says, they are occasionally concealed in useless shells.

"It contains, as it were, a collection of a great many small coins, and of faithful and very useful vestiges which have escaped the destruction of Jewish antiquity *to the shame of the perfidy of some modern Jews*, to the enlightening of the history of *both Testaments*, and to a right explanation of ceremonies, precepts and customs of the former Jewish nation. We find therein the noblest proverbs of antiquity, beautiful sentiments, acute, tasteful and deep thoughts, and innumerable allusions which will make the reader not only better, but also wiser and more learned, and which, like brilliant jewels, do not grace the Hebrew language in a less

degree than the elegant phrases which the classics, the languages of Greece and Rome contain."

The Talmud consists of two parts: first, *משנה* Mishnah (from the Hebrew verb *שנה* *shanoh*, to teach), traditional precept; second, *גמרה* Gemarah (from the Hebrew verb *גמר* *gamor*, to finish, to conclude), because therein was rendered the final judgment or decree, after a thorough discussion of the matter.

THE FIRST EDITOR OF THE MISHNAH

The first collection of the Mishnah was made by Hillel Hanasi (the prince) a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, who acknowledged the authority of his learned countryman, as appears from Matt. xxiii, 3: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' chair, therefore observe and do whatever they enjoin upon you." It is said (*Chagigah*, 14 *et seq.*) that the traditions were so many that they could fill up six or seven hundred books, but Hillel rejected a great many and reduced them to six books.

Hillel was a native of Babylon and settled in Jerusalem, when forty years of age. Having no profession whatever, and being destitute of all other means of obtaining a livelihood, he obtained his daily bread by cutting and splitting wood. Impelled, however, by an unquenchable thirst for truth and knowledge, he even offered his services as wood-cutter gratuitously to poor Rabbis, so that they might allow him to listen to their lectures. Having acquired some knowledge, he desired then to attend a regular course of studies at the most celebrated academy of that time, where

the two ingenious and renowned teachers, the proselytes Shemajah and Abtalion, présided.

The poor wood-cutter tried all that lay in his power to earn enough to pay the admission fee to the door-keeper. One day in winter he worked very hard, but in spite of his steady and heavy labor, he could not gain the usual amount he needed, on account of the shortness of the day. He could, consequently, neither buy for himself the necessary meals, nor, much less, could he pay the door-keeper's fee at the college. Hillel then—like a thief in the night—climbed to the roof, and regardless of cold and danger, listened with close attention to the word of God and the explanations of the sages. The heaven was overcast with clouds, the storm raged fearfully and the snowflakes fell thick and fast upon him; but still poor Hillel listened on. His limbs began to stiffen, he became benumbed and all sense of feeling at last was lost. He was found in the morning apparently dead; but after applying many restoratives he was brought to consciousness again.

When the Scribes or Sophrim were informed of his intense longing for truth, they granted him free admission to their lectures. Hillel made great proficiency in all his studies, and soon the title of Nasi, prince, was conferred on him. He performed his official duties during the term of forty years with great distinction, so that it was said of him that he was worthy to be in the rank of the prophets. His great erudition and sound principles, as well as his excellent character, entitle him to be always remembered among the brightest examples of human intellect and nobility of heart.

NOBLE TRAITS OF HILLEL

Experience teaches us, that patience and sweetness of disposition conquer always the hearts of men. These traits subdue the passionate, disarm the irascible and draw forth love and admiration. Hillel possessed these virtues in the highest degree. Therefore he was appointed Nasi, prince, by King Herod, which office he held with the greatest dignity until his eightieth year. This honorable position was retained by his descendants for ten generations.

It is related (Sabbath, 31) that two men were once wagering four hundred dinars whether Hillel could be provoked to anger or not. He who thought that he could make Hillel angry, entered his residence on a Friday afternoon and unceremoniously rushed towards the door of the bathroom where he was just taking a bath, shouting in a gruff voice: "Is Hillel here? Where is Hillel?" without adding the title of Nasi. Hillel dressed himself hastily, and replied: "What do you wish my son?" "I want to ask you a question." "What is it, my son?"

"I would like to know," said the man, "why do the Babylonians have pointed heads?" Hillel replied, "It seems to me that the midwives are to blame for it." The man went away, but soon returned, crying out: "Hillel! Hillel! Where is Hillel?" Hillel, who had returned from his bath, speedily put on his cloak and asked: "What do you wish, my son?"

"I want to be informed why the Thermodeens have weak eyes?" "That is a very important question, my son. I suppose they are subjected to dullness of sight because they

live in a sandy country, and the wind drives the sand into their eyes." The man left, but soon returned in the same impudent manner. Hillel asked again with a pleasing countenance: "What do you wish, my son?"

"Tell me," said the stranger, "why the Africans have such broad feet?" "Indeed! that is a question of great moment, my son!" answered Hillel, "but I think the reason of it is, because they are obliged to walk mostly barefooted, on account of their living in marshy countries."

"I would ask you," continued the stranger, "many more queries, but I fear you will be angry with me." Hillel seated himself and said: "Let me hear all your questions and I will try to answer them." "Are you," rejoined the stranger, "he whom the people call the Prince of Israel?" "Yes," said Hillel. "Well," continued the stranger, "I wish that there be no more such men as you in Israel." "Why, my son?" interrogated Hillel. "Because I have lost on account of you a wager of four hundred dinars," said the stranger, and related to him the whole story. Hillel kindly reprimanded him, and advised him to be more prudent, and the pecuniary loss he had met with would serve him as a lesson in the future.

Three heathens being desirous to embrace Judaism made their applications personally for this purpose to Shammai, a colleague of Hillel; but, notwithstanding he was a disciple of the latter, he adopted the great virtue which distinguished his master and friend merely theoretically, and not practically. Shammai taught: (see Sayings of the Fathers, i, 15) "Let it be thy business to study the law; say little and do much, and receive all men with affability."

In spite of this wise teaching, however, he did not control his propensity to anger, and when the above mentioned three strangers had an interview with him concerning their conversion to Judaism, he became so irritated at them on account of the peculiar conditions they suggested, that he launched into invectives against them and sent them away.

They then went to Hillel, who received them kindly and endeavored to gain their hearts by his usual mildness. One said, "I wish to become a Jew, provided I can be elected to the office of a high priest." Hillel replied, "My son, whoever desires to hold an office should know all the duties connected with it, in order to discharge them faithfully. Let us, therefore, make ourselves familiar with all the laws and privileges concerning the priesthood." He read with the heathen the third and fourth books of Moses, and when they came to the tenth verse of the third chapter in Numbers, where it reads: "And the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death," Hillel remarked, that even King David, not being a descendant of Aaron, would have suffered the same punishment, if he had attempted to usurp the priestly dignity. The heathen, satisfied with this explanation, embraced Judaism unconditionally.

The second said, "I am desirous to become a Jew, provided that I may keep the written, but not the oral law." Hillel then taught him the letters of the alphabet in their usual order, and afterwards reversed them. "Why is that?" asked the heathen. "Well!" answered Hillel, "why do you reject the statement that one teacher handed down to another the correct statement of the law?" Prompted by this

pertinent observation, the stranger also embraced Judaism unconditionally.

The third said, "I wish to become a proselyte, provided the Jewish religion can be taught to me in so short a time as I can stand on one foot." "Whatever is not pleasant unto thee, do not unto thy fellow-man. This is the substance of the law and the prophets; all the rest is but the commentary thereon. Go and reflect on it," replied Hillel, and thereby won over the third by his kindness and skill.

The above principle is also to be found in Tobit iv, 15: "Do that to no man which thou hatest." Compare also Matt. vii, 12: "Therefore all things whatever ye would" etc.

It would not be out of place to make the reader acquainted with many more maxims of Hillel.

HILLEL'S PROVERBS

Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving and pursuing peace; loving mankind and bringing them to the study of the law.

Sayings of the Fathers, Chap. i, Sec. 12.

He who is ambitious of magnifying his name, destroyeth his name; and he who doth not increase his knowledge, diminisheth it; and he who doth not study the law deserves death; and whosoever useth for himself the crown of the law will perish.

Ibid., 13.

If I do not act for myself who can do it for me? When I am alone by myself, what am I? If I act not now, when shall I?

Ibid., 14.

Hillel once saw a skull floating on the surface of the water, and he said to it: "Because thou didst drown others, thou wast drowned, and at the end will those who drowned thee also be drowned."

Ibid., Chap. ii, Sec. 7.

If the great I AM is here, all is here, and if the I AM is not here, who is here? Therefore reflect thereon continually, for all is in Him, and according to the labor which thou wilt undergo, so shall be thy recompense.

Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, Chap. xii.

Separate not thyself from the congregation; nor have confidence in thyself until the day of thy death. Judge not thy neighbor until thou art placed in the same circumstances; neither utter anything which is incomprehensible, in the hope that it afterwards may be comprehended; nor say, When I shall have leisure I will study; for perhaps thou mayest never have the leisure.

Sayings of the Fathers, Chap. ii, Sec. 5.

The rude man feareth not sin; the ignorant cannot be pious; the bashful cannot become learned, nor the passionate be a teacher; nor will he who is mostly engaged in commerce become wise.

In a place where there are no eminent men endeavor thou to become eminent.

Ibid., Sec. 6.

He who increaseth his flesh multiplieth food for worms; he who multiplieth riches increaseth care; he who increaseth female servants increaseth lewdness; he who multiplieth man servants increaseth robbery; but he who increaseth his knowledge of the law increaseth life.

He who attends much at school increaseth wisdom; he who increaseth in reflection increaseth in prudence; he who exerciseth much charity multiplieth peace.

If one has acquired a good name, he has acquired it for himself; if one has acquired a knowledge of the law, he has obtained immortal life.

Ibid., Sec. 8.

Hillel was the first Jewish scholar who made many critical, exegetical and paleographical remarks on the Bible, when he lectured thereon in Jerusalem. These were partly written on the margin of the book and partly handed down orally from age to age until they were finally collected as *Masorah* tradition, which was finished in the eleventh century.

"Progress and development" was Hillel's motto. He did not endeavor to maintain everything in the Jewish religion in statu quo, but he tried earnestly and zealously to evoke an unceasing activity in the field of religion. His intention was not to make the law more onerous and to interpret it at pleasure; but he always strove earnestly to harmonize it with the circumstances of time and place.

That he did this, however, without any religious scruple, arose from the fact that this had already been done in many instances by the prophets. In this manner it was that the ceremony of circumcision was dispensed with under Moses, while the Israelites were sojourning in the wilderness, and the Day of Atonement under Solomon. The prophet Elijah, who was not a descendant of Aaron, sacrificed at an unholy place. Furthermore, Ezra altered a biblical law in order to punish the Levites, because they did not accompany

him when he went up with the exiles from Babylon to settle in Jerusalem. He ordered the first tithes to be given to the priests, and not to the Levites, as the Bible commands. (Yebamoth, 86b.)

Hillel suspended an express biblical law when he was convinced that it had become impracticable and might prove detrimental to the general welfare. We find accordingly the following departure in Shebiith, xii, 3-4: "When one has filed a declaration in court that he will not consider his debtor released at the release year, then does the seventh year not extinguish debt." He termed such documents פוןבול, *πρός βουλή*, *prosbole*, which is a Greek expression meaning "before the court." He made this institution, as it is explicitly stated in treatise Gittin, Chap. iv, 3, in order to preserve the well-being of the Jewish state; as the rich had refused to lend to the poor, notwithstanding the law makes benevolence obligatory, in view of the debt at the advent of the release year.

Since Hillel considered all the religious laws as instrumental to the advancement of the temporal and spiritual welfare of man, he handed down seven hermeneutic exegetical rules, (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, xxxvii, and Siphra, at the beginning), by which the oral and written law should be interpreted, according to the wants of the time.

He stated, "An inference may be made: first, from minor to major and from major to minor; second, from a similarity of phrases used in different passages; third, from the principal idea contained in one verse; fourth, from the principal idea contained in two verses; fifth, from comparing a general view of a subject with its descriptive details;

sixth, from a particular expression followed then by a general one; seventh, from whatever may be learned from the connection."

The noble and praiseworthy intention of Hillel was, however, not quite understood by his own disciples, nor by those of his hasty-tempered antagonist Shammai.

About one hundred years later Rabbi Ishmael taught that there are thirteen hermeneutic exegetical rules. (See "Thorat Kohanim," in the beginning.) Some time still later Rabbi Elieser, the son of Jose, the Galilean, added again nineteen hermeneutic exegetical rules. These thirty-two rules were then generally adopted to expound the biblical Scriptures, and laws were thus accumulated upon laws, so that every breath of Jewish life was besieged by rabbinical requirements, and the small sacred volume was drowned in the ocean of Mishnahs.

Besides this, the discord which took place between the school of Hillel and the school of Shamai added a great deal to the accumulation of new laws and regulations; because the disciples of Shamai mostly forbade that which those of Hillel allowed. (Eduyot, Chap. iii-iv.) It went so far that the Mosaic law appeared to be like two different codes, and on account of the contradictory regulations of the teachers, (*Tanaim*, תנאים), who acted as they thought proper, the religious people of one place were considered irreligious at another.

THE SECOND EDITOR OF THE MISHNAH

To remedy this evil, Rabbi Jehudah ha-Nasi, the son of Rabbi Simeon, the son of Gamliel, or as they used to call

him, Rabenu ha-Kadosh, "our holy teacher," or simply "Rabbi," or as Aristotle was emphatically called in the Middle Ages, "the philosopher,"—collected all traditions as well as the discussions on the particulars of all ceremonies, rearranged and revised all the rabbinical laws and explanations given in the various academies during the former centuries. He arranged them also like the first edition, in six principal parts, (*Sedarim*) each of these again into single books or treatises, (*Masechtoth*) which were subdivided into chapters, (*Perakim*) and these again into paragraphs, which are strictly called *Mishnahs*. He finished this work one hundred and twenty years after the destruction of the second temple at Jerusalem.

Rabbi Jehudah was the first teacher who ventured to reduce all traditions and rabbinical laws to writing; because in former times only the prophets, heads of congregations and colleges were allowed to have copies of the traditional laws, which they called "*Megilloth Setarim*," "Secret Scrolls." They had to study them secretly in order to commit them to memory, that they might then be able to teach them in public orally. But when the Israelites continued to emigrate into distant countries, and were thus prevented from attending the Jewish academies, Rabbi Jehudah considered it much better to break a time-honored custom and reduce the oral law to writing, so that it might be in every man's hand, and be thus accessible to all, than to expose the whole tradition to the risk of being misunderstood or forgotten.

Although many short-sighted zealots and fanatics decried this innovation as a heresy, Rabbi Jehudah did,

nevertheless, carry out his view, and justified it by referring to the words of the Psalmist, cxix, 126: "It is time for the Lord to work, for they have made void thy law." This verse he interpreted thus: It is time to act in behalf of the Lord, means, that single biblical laws may be violated in order to preserve the fundamental principles of the whole law. (Berachoth, 54a.)

He was a contemporary of the Roman Emperor Antonine the Pious, who was his intimate friend. Having been appointed Nasi by the Emperor, he used his influence on his imperial friend to the best advantage of his co-religionists. Therefore it is said of him, that since Moses he was the first who combined in a high degree erudition with worldly power.

He commanded thus the respect of all, and his collection of the Mishnah was acknowledged and adopted by all Jewish congregations as a religious text book. But after the publication of the Mishnah by Rabbi Jehudah ha-Nasi, his disciples busied themselves in making collections of the expositions of the various opinions to be met with therein, respecting the same subject, and to complete them. Thus originated the work called *Thosephta*, a "Supplement," or "Addition." That of Rabbi Chija and Rabbi Oshaja was preferred on account of its accuracy. The same composed also a book, *Baraitha*, which contains the excluded portion of the Mishnah code by Rabbi Jehudah.

There were other collections made, called *Mechiltha*, of Rabbi Ishmael; *Sifra* or *Thorath Kohanim*, *Siphrai of Rav*, *Pesikta d'rab Kahana*, etc.

Here I must remark, that all the Rabbis from the days

of Simon the Just until the time of Rabbi Jehudah ha-Nasi had the title of *Tanaim*, teachers, or *Sofrim*, scribes. The Rabbis and chiefs of academies who afterwards presided were called *Amoraim*, preachers, expounders.

As there were accumulated many commentaries on the Mishnah, it became then necessary to compile a new text book. This was entitled *Gemarah*, the final judgment or decree.

There are two collections; first, the Hierosolmitic or Tiberianic; second, the Babylonian, both called Talmud. First, *Talmud Jerushalmi*; second, *Talmud Bably*. The first was edited by Rabbi Jochanan, in Palestine, about three hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the latter by Rabbi Ashe, president of the Babylonian academy of Sura,—from 365 to 425—and by his pupil and friend Abina.

THE SYSTEM OF THE PHARISEES

The men educated in the rabbinical colleges at Jerusalem before the destruction of the second temple were generally called פְּרוּשִׁים *Pharisees*,* expounders. The word פְּרוּשׁ is derived from the verb פָּרַשׁ *Parosh*, to explain, to interpret.

I will now endeavor to sketch with an unbiassed mind the system of these Pharisees, as it is to be found in the vast rabbinical literature.

It seems to me that, led by the principle of enjoying the

* Philo calls them the pious, the religious. He took the word *Parush* in the Aramaic sense, meaning: one who secludes himself from worldly passions and devotes himself to the duties of piety.

substance and casting away the shell, the Pharisees made an eclectic use of the Grecian philosophy, assigning as they did, high authority to the Socratic, Platonic and Aristotelian schools. (See my "Guide for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical Writings," p. 63—71.)

They were votaries of supernaturalism and entertained the following opinions: God is an infinite, (Midrash Rabba Gen. Chap. 68,) unique, spiritual, (Chagigah, 15) eternal, necessary, providential being (Midrash Rabba Ex. Chap. 3, and Berachoth, 9,) who cannot be conceived by human understanding, (Berachoth, 31). He does not exist in the world, but the whole universe exists in Him, (Midrash Rabba Gen. Chap. 68,) wherefore God is also called the infinite space, *Makom*. He can be perceived only through His works. (*Ibid.* Chap. 1.)

As regards the creation, they taught that out of the many systems of worlds which were present to His wisdom, He created the best possible one, and instituted the best order, Optimism. (*Ibid.* Gen. Chap. 3.) Hence the principle laid down by Rabbi Akiba: "Whatever God does is well done." (*Ibid.* Gen. Chap. 3, and Berachoth, 60.)

This is illustrated by the following story. It is related, (Berachoth, 60b): Rabbi Akiba was once on a journey, and when reaching the last inhabited place bordering on an extensive forest, he wanted to stop there over night. But as he had applied everywhere in vain for lodging, he said to them: "Whatever God does is well done." He continued his way and resolved to stay all night in the forest.

He tied his jaded mule to a tree, lighted a torch and fastened it on a dry stump, because the night was very

dark. He let the rooster, (the alarm clock in the night of past ages,) which he carried with him to tell him the time, perch. He had hardly climbed up a high tree in order to spend the night in safety, when a lion came and tore his mule to pieces, a wild cat devoured his rooster and the wind blew out his torch. After observing all that had happened, he said to himself, "Whatever God does is well done."

During the same night, the enemy, who were encamped in that vicinity, took that very place by surprise where he had wanted to stay all night, laid it low, and made nearly all its inhabitants prisoners. He then addressed all the fugitives who took to the woods for a refuge: "Was I not right in maintaining that whatever God does is well done? If I had remained in the city, or my torch continued to burn, or had my mule neighed, or the rooster crowed, the enemy would have detected, plundered and taken me prisoner too."

As a consequence of this principle, which they applied to both physical and moral evils, the Pharisees taught that we should thank God also for events that seem to us to be evil. (Berachoth, 54.)

I will now relate an instance which is illustrative of the pious character and just reasoning of Rabbi Akiba, and which is also worthy of the close attention of the reader.

There was once a decree of the Roman Emperor, that any one who would study the holy law should be put to death. Notwithstanding this prohibition, Rabbi Akiba kept preaching publicly on the divine Scriptures, undaunted and with incomparable courage.

Papus, the son of Judah, met him just when he was ad-

dressing a vast audience. He accosted him thus: "Dear Rabbi, art thou not afraid of being punished by the government?" Rabbi Akiba replied: "Our situation reminds me of a story, which I shall tell you now, from which you may learn a lesson."

AKIBA'S FABLE OF THE FOX AND THE FISHES

"A fox was walking on the brink of a river and observed that there was a great commotion among the fishes therein. They were swimming uneasily to and fro. He asked them, 'Why are you so restless to-day? By whom are you pursued?' They answered, 'We want to escape the perils of nets and hooks which men throw out to catch us.'

"Then said the fox, 'I pity you my dear ones, but I will tell you now what you have to do in order to be rescued. Come to me on dry land, where we will then lead a happy life together.'

"But they said, 'Art thou the same beast that is regarded by all as the wisest among the brutes? Thou seemest not to be wise at all, but a fool. If we are in danger of losing our lives in the water, our natural element of life, how much more dangerous would it be for us to be on dry land, where we could not exist at all!'

"This," continued Akiba, "is exactly the case with us, in these times of persecution. If trouble and danger threaten us even when we are studying the Holy Scriptures which are the means of a happy existence and the source of a happy life, how much more are we exposed to all kinds of trouble and woe, if we neglect to study our holy books!"

A short time had elapsed after the above interview be-

tween the two Rabbis, when both Akiba and Papus were arrested and thrown into a dungeon. Papus, broken-hearted, said to Akiba: "Happy art thou, Akiba! Thou art here for having battled for the cause of our holy religion; but woe to me! I am imprisoned for having spent my time in temporal and vain efforts, and I did not mind the wise hint thou hast given me. Woe to me, that I did not heed thy sound judgment, and did not follow thy noble example!" (Berachoth, 61b.)

Furthermore, the Pharisees taught: there is no fatalism on earth, but all that happens is so ordained by God, (Chullin, 7b,) except virtue and piety, which are entirely left to man's free choice.

In reference to this, Rabbi Akiba expresses himself thus: "Everything that is done is foreseen by Providence, although freedom of choice concerning moral actions, is left to man. God judges the world for its own well-being, and the judgment depends on the balance of deeds. Man goes bail with himself for all that he receives and for all that he does; his life is always in the net of retribution that is spread over all men. On the mart of life, the warehouse is open, the merchant (God) crediteth, the journal is open and the hand recordeth, and whosoever wishes may come and borrow; yet the collectors (death in various forms) are continually going around, and sometimes get paid with the consent of the debtors, and sometimes without it; and the collectors have good authority on which to rest for support, for the Court renders its decision in conformity with truth and justice, and everything is thus arranged in order to pre-

pare for the feast." (Sayings of the Fathers, Chap. 3, §§ 15-16.)

And although good and evil are entirely left in this sub-lunary world to man's choice, they taught that he who pursues or endeavors to pursue the path of virtue receives the support of God; whereas the designs of him who chooses the way of wickedness are not fixed from above, but entirely the fruits of his own choice. (Yoma, 38.) These principles are based upon Psalms xxxvii, xxiii and Proverbs xx and xxiii.

As the most ancient talmudical gnomology is contained in פֵּרְקֵי אֲבוֹת *Pirke Aboth*, (the Sayings of the Fathers), I will quote here some of these beautiful maxims and sayings.

ETHICS OF THE FATHERS

Sayings of the Fathers:—CHAP. I.—§ 1. The men of the great Synod laid down three principles: Be careful in giving judgment; train many disciples, and make a fence for the law. (Meaning [sepes legis] guard laws, precautionary ordinances.)

§ 2. Simon the Just, who was one of the last of the great Synod, taught: The welfare of the human race in this world is sustained by virtue of three things, viz.: the law, divine worship and charity.

§ 3. Antigonus of Socho, who flourished in the third century before the common era, taught: Be not like servants who serve their master with a view of receiving rewards; but like servants who serve their master without the view of being rewarded, and then will you truly be God-fearing.

This sage was probably acquainted with the doctrines of Socrates, (Xenophon, "Memorabilia," I, 1, § 2-3, III, 9, § 15,) and therefore he pronounced the above sentence, that doing right even because it is right and without regard to future reward, is worshipping God, is religion.

It is not only historically certain, that in consequence of the invasion of Asia by Alexander the Great, the Grecian language, literature and culture were transplanted to Palestine, but the very name "Antigonus" leads us to suppose that the Chaldaic and Hebrew languages had to yield their places to the Grecian.

THE ORIGIN OF SADDUCEES

The conciseness of the language, however, used by Antigonus in this sentence, caused his disciples Zadok and Baithos to misunderstand its meaning, so that they drew false conclusions from it and adopted the system of the Stoics then flourishing in Greece.

But as the Bible was and remained the centre and appeal of all their investigations, it was but natural that their new philosophical system produced a new mode of interpreting the sacred books, and with it a new religious sect. Allured probably by Grecian stoicism, some teachers strove to vindicate this system of Antigonus. They remarked: From what motives was this principle advanced, and why has it been upheld by later teachers? Is it to be imagined that a laborer should work the whole day without receiving due reward in the evening? If our fathers had acknowledged a life to come and the resurrection of the dead, they would

never have adopted this principle of Antigonus. (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, Sec. 5.)

By these and similar reflections, they gained many votaries, established a school of their own and assumed, after the names of Zadok and Baithos, the appellations of Sadducees and Baithosians. The former, however, remained preponderant. (See Jost, "History of the Israelites," [larger work in 12 vols.], Vol. I, p. 66, and Appendix No. 31; Universal History of the Israelites, [smaller work in 2 vols.], Vol. I, p. 519.)

They assumed like the Stoics, two eternal principles of all things, a passive one, (ήλη Hyle, in Hebrew, *Tohu Wawohu*,) and an active principle, God; hence their system is the dualistic one. It was for this reason that they were designated by their opponents as heretics, as we read in the Talmud Horioth, 11: "Who is a Sadducee? Every idolater." (Compare also Talmud Sanhedrin, 38 a and b, and Midrash Rabba Gen. Chap. viii.)

Although they regarded the soul as a part of the Deity, they nevertheless held it to be perishable, like every other material being, for they professed the conviction that it was absurd to believe in the existence of immaterial things.

§ 6. Procure thyself a teacher and acquire thyself an associate; and judge all mankind favorably.

§ 7. Keep thyself aloof from an evil neighbor and associate not with the wicked; nor flatter thyself to escape punishment.

§ 8. Consider not thyself when called on to judge in a litigation, as an advocate of either side; and when the parties are before thee to try their cause, presume them

both guilty; but when they are gone look upon them both as innocent, provided they submitted to the judicial decree.

§ 9. Cross examine the witnesses and be careful of your inquiries, lest they learn from your own words to utter a falsehood.

§ 10. Love labor, loathe playing the master, and aspire not after dominion.

§ 11. Ye learned men, be cautious of your words, that your disciples may not misconstrue and hence misunderstand them.

Sayings of the Fathers:—Chap. II.—§ 2. It is proper to combine the study of the law (erudition) with practical life, because he who occupies himself with both of these, thinks not of sin.

§ 4. Sacrifice thy will for the will of God, that He may sacrifice the will of others for thy will.

§ 9. If thou art highly learned, do not pride thyself upon it; because for this purpose wast thou created.

It is related, (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, Chap. xv,) that Rabbi Jochanan, who laid down this principle, lost a hopeful son in the prime of his life. His disciples came to console him and found him in all the dignity of woe. Every one related to him a similar calamity that had happened, but they could, nevertheless, not conquer by the recital of such melancholy facts, the deep emotion of his excessive sorrow and grief. Rabbi Eliezer finally approached him very modestly and accosted him: "Rabbi, allow me to tell thee to what thy great loss which thou hast suffered would be comparable. There was a king who gave one of his servants a very costly and precious vessel in keeping. He

wished and sighed daily: 'Oh! may I be so happy that I can deliver it undamaged and faultless when demanded of me by the king.' Dear Rabbi, thy son was such an inestimable vessel, full of knowledge, wisdom, piety of disposition and urbanity of manners, and that thou didst return it to the owner in the most perfect state, must render thee now very happy."

"My son," said the mourning Rabbi, "thou hast comforted me; I am perfectly consoled."

§ 15. Let the honor of thy fellow-man be as dear to thee as thy own; do not get easily into passion; repent one day before thy death; and warm thyself by the fire of wise men, but be careful that the heat does not scorch thee, for all their words are words of fire.

Rabbi Elieser, the teacher of these maxims, when asked by his disciples how any man could strictly follow that rule, to repent one day before his death, as no one knows the time of it, answered: "Therefore be ready every day with penitence and good deeds, as though the next day were thy last." (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, Chap. xv.)

§ 16. Envy, unbridled passion and misanthropy cause the death of man.

Rabbi Joshua, who taught this maxim, distinguished himself by his piety as well as by his wit, so that he became a favorite of the imperial court at Rome; but they sometimes made him the butt of their raillery on account of his ugliness. A princess once asked him: "How does it come that an excellent mind lodges often in an ugly body?"

"Why," he replied, "does your father keep his best wine in earthen jars, and not in vessels of gold and silver?"

The princess ordered at once that vessels of gold and silver should be filled with the best wine; but it soon grew sour. The emperor, who heard the story, then remarked that he knew many excellent men who were handsome too, but that they would be still more excellent if they were less handsome. (Yalkut, Parshath Toldoth.)

I repeat now that which I said in my "Guide for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical Writings," p. 63.

"As Grecian philosophy began with single sentences and proverbs of the so-called Seven Sages, so must we regard the profound maxims and ascetic doctrines of the first teachers, which are contained in the "Ethics of the Fathers," and the "Aboth of Rabbi Nathan," as the beginning and origin of philosophical studies among the Jews."

Many of the Jewish sages have distinguished themselves by erudition as well as by piety. I have selected here a few instances which will acquaint the reader with their true and exalted ideas and views, and which will perhaps at the same time afford some entertainment.

It is remarked in the Mishnah: Why did God create only one man in the beginning?

It was for many reasons: First, that we may learn from this fact, as the earth was once in existence for the benefit and happiness of one human being, the ruin of one pious and honest human soul is equal to the destruction of a whole world, with all its forces, and the preservation of a human soul from perdition is equal to such a meritorious work, as if one had preserved a whole world with all its beautiful creations. Second, that no man shall be bloated with pride of high pedigree, and that one shall not say

to another, "My father was of nobler blood than yours." (Sanhedrin, 37a.)

It is related that a caviling heathen, an acquaintance of Rabbi Gamliel, once said to him: "If your God, as you assert, is the source of all righteousness, please tell me, why did He steal a rib from the first man when asleep, as it is stated in Genesis, Chapter i, 21?"

The amiable and accomplished daughter of Gamliel, who happened to be present, requested her father for the permission to set this infidel to rights. "Well, do so, my dear," answered Gamliel.

She then addressed the heathen and said: "Sir, before arguing our subject, will you have the kindness to do me a favor by calling in a justice of the peace?" "Why," said he, "for what purpose?" She then rejoined: "Some robbers invaded our house last night, purloined a silver goblet and replaced it by a gold one."

"Is that all?" asked the heathen, "I would wish that my house might be pillaged in such a manner every day."

"Well," said she, "since you are of such an opinion, you will probably coincide with me that it was much better for Adam to receive for one rib a beautiful companion for his whole life, who would share his pleasures and woes, and would nourish him faithfully when old and infirm."

"I admit that," said the caviler, "but I would like to know, why did God make him unconscious when He performed for him the sweetest blessing of his existence?"

She then remarked, "I will answer your question, but before all things, get me a piece of raw meat." He did her bidding with alacrity. She at once took it, washed, salted,

dabbed and roasted it in his presence; then she asked him if he would like to have a slice of it; but he politely declined, declaring that he would have had perhaps some appetite, if he had not witnessed the dressing of it.

"Well," she reiterated, "exactly so was the case with the first man. If we would have seen how God formed Eve, he might not have liked her so well as when she stood before him, graced with womanly loveliness and beauty." (Sanhedrin, p. 39.)

Rabbi Meir was the first who remonstrated against the blind faith in the authority of eminent men. He enjoined his pupils to use their own intellectual faculties and rely on the result of their own unbiassed criticism.

He laid down the maxim: Look not at the jar but at that which is therein; for there are new jars full of wine, and old jars which do not contain even new wine. (Sayings of the Fathers, Chap. iv, Sec. 27.)

He was also considered the best of the Talmudical fable writers. The morals contained in three hundred verses of the Bible he illustrated by fables, but only three have been preserved to us. (Treatise Sanhedrin, p. 38, b.)

RABBI MEIR'S FABLE OF THE FOX AND THE BEAR

A fox persuaded a bear to enter the court-yard of a Jewish family on a Friday, late in the afternoon, when they were busy in preparing their meals for the Sabbath, to offer them his services, providing they would allow him to spend the Sabbath with them. But he had hardly entered the premises, when he was welcomed by an armed company

who with their sticks assaulted him with such formidable blows, that he had to run for life.

The bear chagrined and growling, rushed towards the fox, intending to tear him to pieces. The fox, however, succeeded in appeasing his wrath by apologising that they mistook him for his father, who had also offered once his help for the preparation of the Sabbath meals, and at the same time unceremoniously helped himself to the best dainties that they had in the house. "What," asked the bear in great astonishment, "shall I suffer the punishment due to my father?"

"Yes," rejoined master fox, "because it is a well-known proverb: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.' (Ez. xviii, 2.) My dear, I will prove my genuine friendship to you forthwith; I know a place where you can eat and drink to your heart's desire."

He then led his snarling companion to a draw-well with two buckets each fastened to the end of a rope attached to a pole laid across the well. He took two stones of equal weight, each of them heavier than himself. He then seated himself in the suspended bucket, taking one of the stones with him, and descended the well while the other bucket slowly ascended. The bear, astonished at the strange freak of his companion, asked him: "Why do you go down?"

The fox reiterated: "Oh, how does this place abound with meat and cheese! Do you not see the luscious cheese?" calling his attention to the reflection of the full moon then shining brightly in the sky. The bear, enticed by the prospect of a good supper, inquired anxiously: "How can I get down."

"Well," said master fox, "place the stone which I have selected in the suspended bucket and then you seat yourself comfortably on it." Advising him to do so, that in case the stupid bear should follow him he would nevertheless be able to ascend by throwing out the stone from his own bucket and then be out-balanced by the other.

The bear, however, unwittingly put the stone in the bucket and seated himself thereon, to the great joy of master fox, who having thrown his stone into the well, was instantly drawn out of his perilous position and jumped from the bucket to dry land.

The bear finding himself deluded, growled: "How am I to get out?" And the fox answered: "The righteous is delivered out of his trouble and the wicked cometh in his stead. (Prov., xi, 8.) And as it reads in the Bible, (Lev. xix, 36): 'Just balances, and just weights,' which rule you have grossly violated."

JUDICIARY OF PALESTINE

It is stated in Sanhedrin, p. 2, that there were three different courts in the land of Israel.

First, *Sanhedrin Gedolah*, supreme court, which was composed of seventy-one members. Second, *Sanhedrin Ketanah*, the inferior court, consisting of twenty-three members. Third, *Beth Din*, local court, which consisted of three members.

The qualifications for any one to become a judge of the common court, were intelligence, modesty and popularity. (Sanhedrin, 88 b.) When he practised to the satisfaction of the people, he was promoted to the court at the gate of

Har Habayith, (Temple Mountain), from thence to the court at the gate of the *Asarah* (yard), and then he was advanced to the supreme court.

Besides the literary attainments, however, every aspirant to the judicial chair of the supreme court had to be possessed of an exalted, unblemished character, learned in sciences, as in mathematics, medicine and natural philosophy, and well versed in many languages. (*Sanhedrin*, p. 71.)

The seat of the supreme court was at Jerusalem, in a large hall in the temple called *Lishchath Haggasith*, (The Hall of Hewn Stone), and sometimes in the palace of the High-priest. There were also two inferior courts in Jerusalem; one held its session at the gate of temple mountain, and the other at the gate of *Asarah*.

Cases involving capital punishment concerning false prophets, High-priests and a whole tribe, were exclusively cognizable in the supreme court, in the large hall adjoining the temple.

On Friday, Saturday, on the day previous to a biblical festival and on the seven biblical holidays, no court was allowed to hold any session. (*Sanhedrin*, p. 32, *Beza*, 36.)

The punishment in capital crimes was performed in four modes: stoning, burning, beheading and strangling. (*Sanhedrin*, 49, b.) The corpses of those that were stoned to death, were hung by the neck to a gibbet, where they were exhibited until sunset.

The supreme court (*Sanhedrin Gedolah*), had two, and according to some, three secretaries to record all the proceedings.

But forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, the supreme court ceased to try any case where capital punishment was inflicted. (Sanhedrin, 41a.)

A translation of the six divisions of the Mishnah was rendered in Latin by Surenhus in the city of Amsterdam, (1698—1703). A Spanish version appeared in Venice in 1606; one in German by Rabe, in Onolzbach in 1761; and another in Berlin, 1832—1834, by the renowned Jewish historian Dr. Jost, the modern Josephus, who added also vowels to the Hebrew text of the Mishnah. In former times the Mishnah was accentuated as stated (Tosefoth on Megillah, 32a,) similar to that of the Hebrew Bible.

Only some single treatises of the Talmud were translated into Latin and German by Drs. Hirschfeld and Pinner; but many talmudical anthologies, with translations and annotations, have been published by Plantavitius, Hurwitz, Fürstenthal, Fürst and others.

THE STUDY OF THE TALMUD *

The Israelite has a twofold duty to fulfil on earth, *first*, to acquire the highest knowledge attainable to him, and the most perfect moral character; and, *secondly*, as a member of the Jewish religious society, it is his mission to procure constantly more and more regard and respect for his faith, and to strive earnestly to render it the religion of the world. To this, refers already the Talmud, in Pesachim, 80, where we read "Rabbi Elazar also said, The Holy Blessed One exiled the Israelites only for this purpose, among the heathen, that proselytes might be added to them; as it is said, 'And I will sow them for me on the earth.' Does a man ever sow a bushel, unless he expects to reap several quarters therefrom? But Rabbi Yochanan derived it from this verse, 'And I will have mercy on the one who had found no mercy, and say unto the one who was not my people, Thou art my people.'" We have, therefore, not been scattered all over the world to atone for the sins of our fathers; for, in the first place, the All-Merciful does not punish to the thousandth generation; and, secondly, we should have atoned for all long since, through the unheard-of sufferings we have had to endure. The dispersion of the Jewish nation, however, took place rather in order that we might appear before the world, in good truth, as a priestly

* A lecture, delivered at the Synagogue Rodef Sholem, in Philadelphia, and published in the "Occident," 1853, xi, No. 11.

kingdom, and labor everywhere as the apostles of divine truths. This exalted problem to which we should devote our life is indeed well understood by every sincere Israelite, but has in general given, alas! much opportunity for deplorable controversies. Those who call themselves orthodox think that they are bound to preserve all the usual ceremonies, even to the merest trifle, and that all the world will adopt them ultimately, likewise. Those who call themselves reformers maintain that we can attain only then our holy destiny when we cast off all our ceremonies. But only a few, on the contrary, desire a progressive development of the Mosaic system. All these parties could, according to my view, come to a proper mutual understanding with each other, if people would place more weight on the study of the Talmud; because I am firmly convinced that we can learn by this means to comprehend better the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, and consequently, likewise, the manner how we can best accomplish our mission on the stage of the world. This, gentlemen, is the chief motive which induces me to speak of the value of the study of the Talmud. Having thus indicated to you, in a few remarks, the great importance of this theme, let us proceed at once with our subject.

The prejudicial opinions which are generally entertained of our post-biblical literature, namely the Talmudical science, has cast this down to such an extent that one can scarcely believe in a revival of the same. In order, however, to demonstrate the great influence which a thorough study of this so little esteemed literature can have on the

development and direction of Judaism, let us view the subject closer.

In addition to the biblical doctrines, certain laws, customs, and institutions which date back to times removed from history, and lost in the fogs of hoary antiquity, have been held sacred, and regarded as traditions handed down from Moses, from generation to generation. According to the assertion of the book called *Seder Tannaim*, these traditions were contained in six hundred books; of which, however, only six have been regarded as authentic since the time of Hillel and Shammai, and were revised and arranged by Rabbi Jehudah Hannassi, in the year 219, of the common era. This collection embraces, first, explanations of the Mosaic law; secondly, guard laws (*sepis legis*) to guard Israelites against a violation of the prohibitory laws, by means of certain precautionary ordinances; thirdly, customs which have received their sanction through ancient usage. After the publication of their work, called the six divisions of the Mishnah, the Jewish scholars busied themselves mainly, as is well known, to expound the obscure passages contained in these books, to reconcile the apparent contradictions, and to explain the various opinions to be met with therein respecting the same subject, and to determine what is actually to be regarded as the proper course of action; to adduce new laws and ordinances through arguments out of the Mishnah, and to introduce new protective laws. In the fifth century of the common era there lived Rabina and Rab Ashi, who edited this collection under the style of *Gemara*, adopting whatever had come from the mouth of any Rabbi, without any further criticism. They collected

everything which they could find; and this is the reason why the Gemara is so varied, both as regards its absolute or relative value. The Talmudists themselves have not failed to call our attention to this topic since they divide the whole mass of this collection into two parts: the one they designate as *Halachah* and with the definite Syriac article *tha* תא *Hilchatha*, which is synonymous with the Hebrew word *Halichah*, "walk," or "course," and signifies the same as *Mishpat*, "law," "custom," "statute;" and the other they called *Agadah*, or with the definite article, *Agadtha* אגדתא, derived from the Syriac or Chaldean root אגד *Nagad*, "to tell entertainingly," consequently meaning "interesting stories or accounts."

To the department of *Halachah* belong biblical commentations, various opinions, doubts and reasons for decisions, new rules, ordinances and protective laws of the most eminent Rabbins. All the rest, such as medicinal, physical, political and other precious documents regarding the sciences, those which refer to the history of the times and to the Jewish nation in general, allegorical explanations, legends, fables, proverbs, etc., are called *Agadah*. Both the above are comprised under the general name of Rabbinism. This has during many centuries obtained such an authority in Israel, and our people are so devoted to the same, that it may freely be regarded as the measure of all Jewish religious opinions and actions. Nevertheless is this system, originating among the most learned Israelites, and recorded in the Talmud, regarded at this time even in very different lights. Some maintain that the Talmud is nothing but a complicated mass of human institutions, an instrument to

render the yoke of the ceremonial law still heavier, a system upheld by these for pillars, sophistry, superstition, fanaticism, and bigotry; while others believe that through the many senseless, improper, and objectionable opinions which the Talmud contains, with respect to the most important human affairs, the few grains of gold which are to be found here and there are lost sight of, and are in general therefore more injurious than beneficial. Yes, every one who is able to read a few passages in the Bible dares to attack our Talmud. It would indeed be very mournful if our belief, which we are firmly convinced is destined to become at some time the religion of the world, should have been preserved by such unworthy bearers; it would be terrible, and therefore almost inconceivable likewise, that Providence should have entrusted the heavenly treasure, which He had in ages past bestowed on mankind for their salvation, to men who, instead of going in advance of the generations of man with it, as with a pillar of fire, in order to point out to them the true path, have disgraced it to such an extent that it has become transformed into a pillar of thick dark clouds, which blinds the eyes and misleads every one on erroneous paths. But before we endeavor to investigate all these bitter complaints against the Talmud, we will let it speak itself concerning the varied contents, concerning the value and authority which it desires to possess, and the influence which it wishes to exercise.

In Treatise Succah, 28, it is related among other things of Rabbi Jochanan, son of Zakkai, that he occupied himself with the acquisition of important and unimportant subjects; to which by way of explanation is added, "The important

things consist of metaphysics, and moral philosophy; and the unimportant things, on the contrary, are Talmudical disputations." Do not be astonished, gentlemen, that I translate *הו"ת דאב"י ורבא* with "Talmudical disputations;" for since Rabbi Jochanan lived, as is well known, at the time of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem, and Abaye and Raba, at a much later period, it is impossible to view "the discussions of Abaye and Raba," otherwise than as denoting Talmudical disputations in general. We read farther in Sanhedrin, fol. 24, "He caused me to dwell in darkness, like those long since dead (Lamentations, iii. 6)"; this, said Rabbi Jeremiah, means the mode of studying in Babylon." In the Talmud Yerushalmi, Treatise Maasseroth, we read, "Rabbi Ze'ira denounced the Agadah writings, and called them 'books of witchcraft'." In Sopherim, xvi., Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, pronounces the following judgment on a certain Agadah, "He that has composed it can have no share in the life to come; he that listens to it does nothing meritorious, and he that explains it (rationally), deserves to be blessed." The most violent judgment concerning the authors of the Babylonian Talmud is met with in Beza, 16; "Those Babylonian fools." For this same reason do the Gaon Rabbi Samuel ben Chofni, and Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, express themselves after the following manner concerning the authority of the Talmud. The first says, that we must not entertain any opinion which is opposed to sound common sense, although this opinion should be supported by the authority of the Rabbins in the Gemara. The latter writer, in an epistle to the Rabbins at Marseilles, says (Iggereth ha-Rambam, 9a) "And so it is

not proper for a man to forego common sense matters, which have been proved by good arguments, and give them up, relying on the words of a single one of our wise men of blessed memory; for it is possible that he has made a mistake in the matter, at the time being, or that some not well-understood meaning is attached to the word; or he may have said them as applicable to that period, or a certain occurrence, etc. A man should never cast off his reason; for his eyes are before, not behind him."

In the same manner does Rabbenu Nissim (the Ran), express his views in his commentary to Berachoth, 59, with reference to the words of Rab Ketina, "This is merely an Agadah, and respecting this and similar legends, the Rabbins have laid down the principle, that we are to attach no importance to what is said in Agadah."

From the preceding you can learn, gentlemen, that the Talmudists, together with the greatest and most renowned Rabbins themselves, did not regard as important all that is written down in the Talmud, nay, that they disapproved of, and rejected a part of the Gemara. Should, therefore, one or the other superstitious view be found in the Gemara, for instance, witchcraft and demons, and should even one or the other injurious opinion have been expressed: they must nevertheless be regarded as nothing else, except what they are in reality, namely, the errors of a few individuals, abortions of the intellect, sprung from a few fanatics, from whom no religious sect is altogether free. For example, Christian theologians of the fifteenth century busied themselves with the inquiry, whether God could commit a sin if he would; whether it would be possible for God to assume a

human nature, and especially that of a woman; whether Mary would have herself crucified her son, in case others had not done it; whether Mary and Joseph had brought the ox and ass with them to Bethletem, etc. Unjust as it would be to conclude from this, that all Christian theologians of the fifteenth century whiled away their time in so foolish a manner: just so absurd would it be to reject at the present day the whole Talmud as sophistry, because some few Rabbins have been sophists. The Talmud has, alas! shared the same fate under which even now our whole nation suffers in the old world. It is well known, that when one Israelite commits there any wrong or crime, it is not said, that such a one or the other has done this, but what great rogues the Jews have proved themselves. The same misfortune befell the Talmud. If one or the other Rabbi has misspent his life with useless studies, and in establishing paradoxical opinions, it is not said that this Rabbi was a sophist, but what a set of deceivers and fools have not the Rabbins been? But if we direct a closer view toward the Talmud, we shall find it to be in a great degree the most luminous commentary on the Bible, and that it contains, as Buxtorf somewhere says, sound theological sciences, although they be occasionally concealed in useless shells. We find therein, says this Christian theologian, the noblest proverbs of antiquity, beautiful sentiments, pointed, tasteful, and deep thoughts, and innumerable allusions which will make the reader not only better, but also wiser and more learned, and which, like brilliant jewels, do not grace the Hebrew language in a less degree than do the elegant phrases which the classics contain, the languages of Greece

and Rome. As proofs of the sound theological science and basis, which are contained in the Talmud, I will adduce in this place but a few passages.

In *Negaim*, vii. § 1, *Sifra Lev. xiii. 2*, and *Yebamoth 5*, the following principle is laid down: "We can bring no proof from a verse which was written before the promulgation of the law." Reflect, gentlemen, what a bold, though at the same time logical thought. How many great and little laws must be made inoperative by the truthful application of this maxim! I could develop and illustrate this yet farther, gentlemen; but as it might lead me too far, and in order not to give offence to any one, I leave it to your own reflection.

The heads of the Rabbinical schools have, moreover, themselves suspended express biblical laws, when they were convinced that they had become impracticable, and might become injurious to the general welfare. We find, accordingly, in *Shebiith x*, § 3, 4, פרחבול אינו משמט: "When one has made a public judicial assignment, that he will not regard his debtors released at the release year, then does the seventh year not extinguish a debt," and this institution was made by Hillel, as we find in *Gittin iv. 3*, in order to preserve the well-being of the Jewish state [as the rich had refused to lend to the poor, notwithstanding the law makes benevolence obligatory in view of the extinguishment of the debt at the advent of the release year]. It will thus appear that the great Hillel introduced a precautionary rule against the biblical law of the release from debt at the seventh year. (See *Kiddushin*, 38b.) In the same manner were several biblical laws not observed, because the significance had

ceased to exist. For instance, we read in Sotah, fol. 46, "When the murderers increased, they did not observe any more the law of breaking the neck of the calf, which was to be done when a murdered body had been found, when the murderer was unknown." (See Deut. xxi. 1, etc.) "When adultery greatly increased, they ceased to observe the ordinance of the bitter waters." (See Num. v. 12, etc.)

From this we can clearly learn that it was not the intention of the Talmudists to make the law more onerous, and to interpret it at pleasure; but that they strove earnestly to bring it always in harmony with the circumstances of time and place. That they did this, however, without any religious scruple, arose from the fact that this had already been done likewise in many instances by the prophets. In this manner it was that circumcision was omitted under Moses, and the Day of Atonement under Solomon. The prophet Elijah, who was no priest, sacrificed at an unholy place.

Concerning the admissibility of necessary alterations with regard to many religious institutions, the Talmud speaks as follows in Makkoth 24, "Four things did Moses say as a decree against Israel, and there came four elders and annulled them. Moses said that God visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and the children's children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him; but there came the prophet Ezekiel and revoked this decree, by saying, only the person that sinneth shall die; the father shall not bear for the iniquity of the son, nor shall the son bear for the iniquity of the father; as every one will have to atone for his own misdeeds." This will prove to us that

the Talmud is not merely an explanation of biblical writings, endeavoring to maintain everything in our religion in *statu quo*; but that it is also a school for a necessary and progressive development of the same, and that it is intended to evoke an unceasing activity in the field of religion. It is, so to say, the divine flaming Sinai, which is to enkindle every Jewish community for the fulfilling of their life-problem. Truly, in this wise only can a purified Mosaic Judaism, as it was taught and propagated by the prophets (Is. xxx. 15, 16; Jer. xxii. 15, 16; Ez. xviii. 6) exist; since it excites human understanding to reflecting for itself, and renders it strong and capable to discover by itself the everlasting truths.

To effect what has just been said, we find in Chagigah 9, "The annulling of vows flies in the air, and has nothing on which it can rest; the rules regarding Sabbath, festival-offering, and the violation of the holy things, and the offerings to be brought for this, are like mountains dependent by a hair; as there are but few biblical verses referring to them, while the rules of action are many." By saying this, the Talmudists did not purpose to question the validity of these institutions; but the reader is advised to think for himself, to subject each and every thing to his criticism; since inquiry leads to thinking, and what we have thus acquired becomes then the means of the ennobling of our spirit. It is also evident that such a procedure must lead a man to the knowledge of the truth. It is undeniable, gentlemen, that the human spirit is destined for progress; and that it would be a useless Herculean task if one were to attempt to arrest the course of the wheels of progress, and

to check them as they roll along. But it must not be lost sight of, that for the instruction of mankind it is not alone requisite to pull down antiquated prejudices, to attack error and superstition, and to communicate certain irrefragable principles; but that it is primarily necessary, to effect this, to remove all obstacles which oppose a rational self-instruction, and to put aside all circumstances which render it impossible to approach the truth by means of an independent thinking.

I do not doubt, therefore, gentlemen, that a thorough study of the Talmud will contribute much to the enlightenment of our nation. But in order to be convinced of the necessity of such a spiritual lever, let us view a little closer the moral position of our coreligionists in this country. They can be readily divided, according to my opinion, into three classes: the first being the great mass of sensual men, who do not observe the ceremonial laws, because they yield to the dominion of their untamed passions. They are for the most part full of self-conceit, as regards their own smattering of knowledge, which they have brought hither from the old world, and they have adopted a fashionable polish, derived from Thomas Paine and his adherents, without having comprehended their spirit. These deem themselves enlightened, and are still in a deeper darkness than their fathers. For the latter were at all events consequent with themselves, and were devoted to what they believed to be the truth with all their hearts; but the others pretend hypocritically to possess an enlightenment, whilst they suppress, every moment, the voice of their conscience. They are so worldly, that they cannot separate themselves from

earthly things till the last moments of their life. They only are adherents of Judaism that, when they die, they may be interred in a Jewish burying-ground.

The second class embraces the rabbinical orthodox party, who desire to adhere to Rabbinism with all their heart, although they are not able to bear on their shoulders the entire burden of human institutions. The book of customs has usually, with these men, more authority than Moses and the prophets. The so-called scholars who belong to this class regard the *Sulchan Aruch*, a work consisting of four volumes, and composed in the 16th century by a Turkish Rabbi, Joseph Caro, and enriched with additions by a Polish Rabbi, Moses Isserles, and which was commented on about a hundred years later by other Polish Rabbins, as the highest authority. Their heart is good; but their reason has not been properly developed. For if this had been the case they would surely have discovered that the Talmud, a traditional work and originating therefore on an historical basis, can only be viewed as a source of theology, but could never be finally closed by some one as a law good for all eternity; they would then have discerned for a certainty, that the most orthodox Rabbins had permitted themselves innumerable reforms, and had even abolished the obligation of Mosaic laws. Thus for instance did Rabbenu Gershon, who lived in 1070, declare the marriage of a brother with his sister-in-law as inadmissible. They would have then acknowledged, that the Talmud dispenses us from the observances of some ceremonies, when the thoughts, for the remembrance of which they are destined to serve as signs, have already taken possession of our

heart and spirit. We find, therefore, in reference to the laying of Tephillin, one of the most sacred ceremonies, "He that reads the law is absolved from Tephillin;" "He that is engaged in doing any of the commandments is absolved from Tephillin." Farther we read in Zebachim 19, "The priests, Levites, delegates of Israel, and the temple servants, are absolved from Tephillin." They would at length come to the conclusion, that without inward purification and sanctity all holiness in deeds is contrary to the true spirit of Judaism.

The third class consists of the truly learned and educated Israelites. They are the sincere adorers of the religion of reason, which is based on a purified Mosaic Judaism. Their sole valid authority are Moses and the prophets. The number, however, of this class is still very small; I am, nevertheless, firmly convinced that the members of the same, who alone are exclusively worthy to bear the name of Israelites, will soon increase, when the scientific study of the Talmud shall flourish, and when the glorious principle of the Talmud, "that he may live and not die through them," shall be spread among Israel.

He, therefore, who has a sincere care for the promotion of real enlightenment and independent thinking in Israel, ought to seek to effect that in every higher Jewish educational institute there be not given a mere naked religious instruction, but that also a scientific study of the Talmud be likewise introduced.

Let, however, no one say "What concern have I with educational establishments, provided I only act rightly and honorably?" for I must reply to such a one, "Do not believe

by any means that thou hast done enough as an Israelite, when thou hast had mercy on the poor, and hast given him some alms, for which he can provide a night's lodging; or that thou hast done much when thou hast fed a hungry person, or hast clothed the naked with thy superfluous garments. This all is good enough; but still it is very little indeed. Thou hast done well to his body, and this beneficence extends only to a few weeks or at most years; when, however, thou strivest to benefit the spirits, which are equally with thy own soul destined for immortality, then hast thou done acts of beneficence, the consequences of which are imperishable like the spirit which has received them." This only, gentlemen, may truly be called "the spreading of the kingdom of God on earth."

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS ON THE TALMUD *

Rabbi Simon Ben Jochai said: "If you see that the people give up the law as lost, rise and cling firmly to it."

Engaged with preparations for the dedication of the new synagogue of my congregation, *Tifereth Israel*, I was unpleasantly disturbed by a hero of a German *Batrachomyomachy*. He intends nothing more than to throw away at once the Talmud, the life preserver of Mosaism, approved by two thousand years of history; because he thinks that the latter would steer now safely in the great ocean of nations without it. Having no time to expatiate now on this subject, I will only extract some opinions upon the value of the Talmud, as being a commentator of the Bible, as I have found them in the books of ancient and modern Christian theologians.

Hieronymus, one of the most renowned teachers of the Christian church, who lived in the fourth century of the common era, writes to Marcellus: "We have drawn this from the inmost source of the Hebrews, and we did not follow the flow of opinions and errors with which the whole world is filled," etc.

Johann Buxtorf I. (*De Abbreviat, Heb.* p. 1) says: "The learned Scriptures of the Jewish sages were always and are now a day of the greatest use in order to have a correct knowledge of the books of Moses and the Prophets. All the

* Reprinted from the "Israelite," ii, 23, 27.

learned men, who ever were and are engaged now upon the explanation of mysterious expressions, obscure passages and sentences of the Old Testament, liable to be interpreted in many different ways, have unanimously attested at all times and even in our days, that they have drawn it from the books of those sages," etc. (*Ibid.* p. 233) "The Talmud is a learned work of a great body of knowledge composed by different and the most profound Rabbis. It treats of all sciences in all its manifold branches; it teaches a full and most perfect civil and canon law of the Jews, *in order that the whole nation and the Jewish synagogue may happily live up to it in the way most desirable,*" etc. "Its authority depends partly on its authors, partly on its contents," etc. "But the contents contributed also most to its esteem; *because it is partly the most luminous commentary on the written law, partly it is also a supplement and a support, and the whole written law would very often be incomprehensible without it.*"

Buxtorf filius (in *Dedic. ad Lex. Talm.*) says: "The Talmud contains sound theological doctrines, although, as Maimonides somewhere says, they are occasionally concealed in useless shells. It contains, as it were, a collection of very many small coins and of faithful and very proper vestiges which have escaped the destruction of Jewish antiquity, *to the shame of latter Jews,* to an enlightening of the history of both testaments and to a right explanation of ceremonies, precepts and customs of the former Jewish nation," etc. "We find therein the noblest proverbs of antiquity, beautiful sentiments, acute, tasteful and deep

thoughts and innumerable allusions which will make the reader not only better, but also wiser and more learned, and which like brilliant jewels, do not grace the Hebrew language in a less degree than the elegant phrases do which the classics, the languages of Greece and Rome contain."

Professor Delitzsch in his work entitled: "*Zur Geschichte der juedischen Poesie*," p. 31, says: "What the great poet Jean Paul has said in reference to Hamann, may be applied to the Talmud literally. It is a sky full of telescopic stars, and no human eye can solve all the nebular bodies."

Theodor Hackspann (*Prolg. not. Theolog.*, p. 1) says: "The laws and customs appertaining to the Jews nobody can better explain, than they themselves," etc. "But we will not the less seek counsel from the Jews about the laws which constitute the greatest part of the Old Testament, than we must inquire of the Romans about the twelve tables among the ancient Romans, and of Athenians for those of the Athenians, and of the Mohammedans for those of the Mohammedans."

Hackspann says further: "But if in a word the historical books are not understood without those books of the Jewish Talmud, the less it can be the case with the Five Books of Moses in which everything regarding rites and other things is for a great part subject to great difficulties, lies in obscurity, and can only be settled by those philologists."

I could, of course, enlarge this collection of Christian opinions on the value of the Talmud to infinity; but in order not to weary the candid reader, I will add merely the opinions of the two authors of the established religions of the civilized nations.

Jesus, the founder of primitive Christianity and a bitter antagonist of the Pharisees (Sophrim, authors of the Talmud) said in Matthew ch. xxiii, 3, "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' chair, therefore observe and do whatever they enjoin upon you." Just so did Mohammed consider the Talmudical exegesis as obligatory, as it follows from the second Surah in the Koran. Speaking of the Law he addressed there the Israelites in the following words: "We deliver to you also the book of Moses and the Phurkan (i.e., the scroll of discriminations), in order that you may learn to understand the right path through life." (See Selden "*De Successionibus*" in prolog.).

Even the most distinguished commentators of the Koran Mohammed ibn Achmed illustrates this passage with the following words: "We deliver to you the book of Moses, i. e., the Law or the Pentateuch and the Phurkan, i. e., the discrimination between truth and falsehood, between what is allowed and what is not allowed, in order that you, etc., may be kept from error."

Having proved, that the most learned theologians and the main founders of the religions of the civilized world esteemed very highly the Talmud, i. e., *the traditions which are written down in it*, I beg leave to ask the ultra reformers, and especially Dr. David Einhorn the following modest questions:

How and by what do you refute all the above cited world-renowned and scientifically well founded opinions? Do you think
 אם כל חכמי אומות עולם בכף מאזנים ומהרר דוד איינהארן
 בכף שזיה מכריע את כלם.

"If all the learned men of all nations of the world were in

the balance scale, and Dr. Einhorn were standing alone in the other scale, would he outweigh them all?" Well! it may be so; but you know the people are not so credulous now, they want clear arguments and irrefutable proofs. Please, give us not abusive words and phrases, give scientific refutations of all the above cited and well known opinions. Do not wonder, my dear sir, at my addressing you only, and not also the forty members of your congregation. I wish, as Moses said, **מִי יִתֵּן כָּל עַם ה' נְבִיאִים** "I would the whole nation of God were preachers!" But convinced, that many and perhaps the greatest part of them are scarcely able to read the Talmud, and much less to understand it, now in the name of common sense, in the name of truth and impartiality, I cannot refrain from asking, what right have such persons to condemn a work which they have never read or studied with the necessary attention? What right have such persons to reject such teachings, which have been highly esteemed by millions of men for more than two thousand years, and are still esteemed by the majority of Israelites, and which they only know in parcels from hearsay and not from the original source? It is a ridiculous presumption, if merchants, tradesmen and mechanics of every sort who have not the least knowledge of theology, decide on very important theological questions, requiring a deep study for a series of years, and upon which only men of the learned profession ought to express a judgment. Would it not be ridiculous, if a naval architect would ask counsel from a simple shoemaker about shipbuilding, or if an astronomer would demand an advice from a simple joiner about astronomical matters? And is it less ridiculous, if a

theologian who must be possessed of profound archeological, historical, philosophical and philological knowledge should consult on important problems with men who are strangers in all the just mentioned provinces of science? Nay, should men, who were never initiated in the higher branches of theological sciences the better understand it than all men, who have devoted their whole life to theology, and have unceasingly studied the sources belonging to it? A congregation has only a right to decide on financial but not on theological matters, because the first requires only common sense, the latter demands also great and deep erudition and an inquiring mind which are not the attainments of a whole congregation. From all this it follows, why I have tried only to refute you, and not your congregation or other persons, who have pronounced a protest against the platform of the Cleveland conference. But you, Sir, who are well versed in the ancient Jewish literature, and are only misled by false principles or by ambition to become at once renowned in America, I feel in duty bound for truth's sake to justify the second principle of our platform laid down in our conference. Sir, you, who reject the Talmud, please tell me what is meant by the expression חלב? Lev. iii, 17, reads: כֹּל חֵלֶב וְכֹל דָּם לֹא תֹאכְלוּ, "no fat or blood shall you eat."

If you reject the traditional explanations written down in the Talmud, then you should not eat any fat, as you do in regard to blood. Again tell me, Sir, how will you without Talmudical explanations reconcile the passages in Ex. xii, 15, where it reads: "seven days shall unleavened bread," and Deut. xvi, 3, "seven days shall you eat then upon unleavened bread," and *ibid.* v, 8, "six days shall you eat unleav-

ened bread and on the seventh day there shall be a festival for the Lord your God," etc. Is not here a visible contradiction? I could put a great many more similar questions; but I know you will smile upon me, saying: "All this is of little importance and is not worth considering. The pith of the whole Pentateuch is the Decalogue, which has shaken heathenism in its very foundations," as you have said explicitly in your inaugural sermon. This is very wrong, as I will prove to you. It is historically evident, that the contents of the Ten Commandments were known to the people long before the revelation on the mount of Sinai. If you would read with attention from *בראשית* until the *עשרת הדברים* you will find first in Gen. ii, 3, "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," etc. Cain is punished for murder. God commanded Noah not to kill any person. Robbery and immorality are punished with the Deluge. (See the "History of the Israelitish Nation," by Isaac M. Wise, p. 82-84.)

I agree with my esteemed friend in this point, and I will only add a few proofs more for this statement which he omitted. Gen. xxvi, 15 reads, "God appeared unto Isaac and said," etc., "for a reward, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my precepts, namely my commandments, my laws and my rules." Hence it follows, that the Talmud is correct in stating, that Jacob and also his son Joseph in Egypt kept the Sabbath holy, and that the latter has made it a duty to his family to do the same. The Talmud is also correct, that it maintains Sanhedrin 56. God has ordered before the revelation seven or according to others eleven Noachitic laws. And now, my dear Sir, it is also un-

philosophical to maintain, that the decalogue is the pith of the Five Books of Moses. Every reasonable man would admit, that the quintessence of the whole religion, as you say the Ten Commandments are, must undoubtedly contain all, what is necessary to know, in order that the aim and end of the revelation may be reached surely.

Please, tell me, Sir, where is the immortality of the soul and reward and punishment of our actions in a future world taught in the Decalogue? Should nothing be mentioned in the most important verses, or in the Mosaic platform, according to your opinion, of all that without which no religion would deserve this name, or without which it can have no worth for us? without which all virtue and morals would be nothing than mere phrases? The two poles, namely immortality and reward together with punishment of the soul are not contained in the Ten Commandments, but are taught in other passages in the Pentateuch, and not in the Decalogue.

Sir, who has taught more clearly and more profoundly the happiness of the soul and reward together with punishment of our actions in a future world than the Talmud? Does it not say שְׂכָר מַצוּה בְּהָא' עֹלָמָא לִיכָא, "noble actions are not always rewarded in this world?" Would not you and your followers be liable to the same errors and corruptions as the Sadducees, who maintained exactly as you do, that nothing was further delivered by the law than that which was in the meaning and intention of the words? Your platform which you give to us for our creed renders our creed a base and unworthy one, because we cannot find in it a syllable about matters in which the salvation of man-

kind is concerned; but the platform as it is given by my worthy colleagues, is founded on the spirit of our holy law and on history, and if generally accepted in Israel; it would dispel and remove atheism, nihilism, frivolity, darkness and superstition, unto which they were reduced by these evils, and would foster solid and true virtue and morality, and then will we be able to fulfill our mission, namely, to make the sun of truth and righteousness shine upon all nations.

P. S. Regarding your question about shaving the beard with a razor, I must tell you, that the talmudical interpretation is correct, and only the casuistical law covering the same is based on misapprehension of the Mishmah.

I will cite here the main passage, which is spoken of by all casuists. Makkoth, 20b, reads:

“Who produces any baldness upon his head, who cuts the curls of both sides of the temples, who cuts off the extremity of his beard, and who makes only one incision on account of a dead, he is guilty of violating the law,” etc. You see the Mishmah took the passages in the Bible merely concerning the dead as a heathen custom; but never prohibited it, if it was only a general custom of common life and society, and therefore it has not the least connection with religious ideas whatever.

In our next synod at Philadelphia, please God, I will speak on this subject at large.

ATTACKS ON THE TALMUD BY THE RADICAL REFORMERS *

I have already made (1854¹) some remarks on the utility of the study of the Talmud which contain such truisms, that I can not restrain myself from repeating them as a preface to my present article.

The Talmud has, alas! shared the same fate under which even now our whole nation suffers in most empires in the old world.

It is well known, that when one Israelite commits there any wrong or crime, it is not said that X or Y has perpetrated an evil act, but what great rogues the Jews have proved themselves, or what a low and cunning people are the Jews!

The same misfortune befell the Talmud. If one or the other Rabbi has misspent his life with useless studies and sophisms, and in establishing paradoxical opinions, it is not said that this Rabbi was a sophist, but what a set of deceivers and fools have the Rabbis been, or what nonsense is ancient Judaism.

Should one or the other superstitious view be found in the Gemara, for instance, witchcraft and demons, and should even one or the other injurious opinion have been expressed, they must nevertheless be regarded as nothing else, except

* Reprinted from the "Israelite," iv, Nos. 5, 7.

¹ See "Occident," Vol. xi, No. 11.

what thy are in reality,² namely, the errors of a few individuals, aberrations of the intellect, sprung from a few fanatics, from whom no religious sect is altogether free.

For instance, Christian theologians of the fifteenth century busied themselves with the inquiry, whether God could commit a sin if he would; whether it would be possible for God to assume a human nature, and especially that of a woman. A very distinguished French theologian has shown the derivation of the word "diabolus" in this way. "Dia" means "two," "bolus" "a bite," hence "diabolus" two bites, because the devil makes only two bites when he would swallow us. The first is the body and the second the soul. Again, learned Christian theologians disputed for nearly three hundred years, whether in a certain prayer, if said in the German language, a pronoun must be used before or after the noun.

Unjust, as it would be to conclude from this that all Christian theologians of the fifteenth century, and the other afore-mentioned time whiled away their life in so foolish a manner; just as absurd would it be to reject, at the present day, the ancient Judaism as represented in the Talmud, as sophistry; because some few Rabbis have been sophists.

We should, therefore, not collect some passages of a few fanatical and low spirited Rabbis, and tell the people that this is an ancient Judaism as all the enemies of the Jews always did; because this is a mean, false and treacherous accusation against our national literature, against the most luminous commentary on the Bible.

² See Treatise Sota 22, 2, Sanhedrin 98, 2. The Ran on Berachoth 59, Jerushalmi Masseroth, Treatise Sophrim, chapter xvi.

It is not worth while to review all the complaints which the anti-Talmudists prefer against the Talmud; because whatever they said was a thousand times before produced by the most bitter enemies of Judaism in the old country, and was innumerable times scientifically refuted.

For purposes of illustration I will give a few instances.

Sanhedrin 59, reads: "Rabbi Johanan said, 'A Samaritan who studies the law, is guilty of death.' Resh Lakish said, 'A Samaritan who keeps the Sabbath, is guilty of death.'"

But these strange statements of these two Rabbis are contradicted by a more ancient passage. "Rabbi Meir taught that a Gentile who studies the law of Moses should be as highly appreciated, as the High Priest." (Sanhedrin 59, Baba Kamma 58.) Besides, it seems to me that Rabbi Jochanan had abandoned his erroneous notions in regard to Gentiles in the later days of his life; because it reads, Sabbath 118: "Rabbi Chija, son of Abba, taught in the name of Rabbi Jochanan: Whosoever keeps the Sabbath day holy according to law, although he worshipped idols like the generation of Enoch, his sins will be forgiven."

Again we read, *Pesikta Rabati* chapter 25, "The Sabbath was commanded to Gentiles in the first of the ten commandments, and to the Israelites in the latter."

In regard to קול נכיר, I refer the reader to Treatise Baba Kamma, 113, where it reads, that Rabbi Akiba taught: It is forbidden by the Mosaic Law to commit any violent acts against a heathen. Again, it reads in Chullin 94, "Samuel taught we dare not deceive anybody, not even an idolatrous person."

Again to the passage Gen. xxii, 12: "for now I know that thou fearest God," the Midrash Rabbah adds: "because our patriarch Abraham of blessed memory opened his house to all the heathens, and gave them food."

We see now clearly, that the narrow-mindedness of the Talmudical laws of which the anti-Talmudists speak, exists not in the Talmud, but only in their own imagination. And now I challenge them:

1. To show any passage where it is taught by ancient Judaism, that there are laws in the Bible which are מירת המלך, "Royal decrees," and, if so,

2. That the expression מירת המלך means reason should be subordinated to divine dispensations of destiny.

I am well aware that there is a passage in Berachoth, 33, which is always quoted by the modern enemies of Judaism to prove the narrow-mindedness of the Talmudical authors: but for the sake of truth I will quote fully the mentioned passage in my next article, and will endeavor to show, that you only read and do not study the Talmud scientifically, and therefore you misrepresent entirely ancient Judaism.

Treatise Berachoth, 33, reads: "If anybody would pray: 'Thou bestowest mercy upon the bird's nest,' or, 'For all the blessing Thou hast granted to me, blessed be Thy name,' or, 'We thank Thee, we thank Thee,' such a worshipper should be silenced." One radical reformer tells us in a German composition, and another echoed it in an English version, because the laws must be considered as not emanating from the mercy of God, but as מרות המלך (Royal decrees), and, therefore, it is not proper to use the expression "mercy."

But how can they prove their assertion, which is slander on ancient Judaism?

The Gemara (a commentary of the Mishnah) gives us, for the above quoted laws, the following two reasons by two teachers of a later age, named Rabbi Jose bar Abin and Rabbi Jose bar Sebida. The first said: "One, who prays in this way is, therefore, incorrect; because it seems, as it were, that God has only compassion with the bird's nest, and not with other creatures also." The other said, according to Rashi: It is, therefore, prohibited to pray thus, because it expresses the idea that the biblical laws are given by virtue of God's mercy, and the whole Mosaic compensation was rather promulgated to make known to the world, that the Israelites are God's servants, always keeping his commandments, although the evil propensity and the Gentiles try to persuade them, that they are of no use at all.

This explanation of Bar Sebida's opinion by Rashi was, however, rejected by three distinguished Rabbis.

Rabn (ר'א'ב'ן) in his work entitled *מאמר השכל* illustrated the clause of Bar Sebida in this way: "The Talmudists intended to tell us, that we are not forbidden the use of the animate beings on account of God's mercy to them. For if this had been the case, God would have forbidden us to make use of them altogether."

"The cause of the prohibition is only to teach us good manners. And this it is what they said: The mercy of God concerns not the birds in establishing the law about the birds' nest, but it is only given for our own benefit." Rabbi Ahron in his book entitled *Chinuch* said: "It is impossible that the Talmudists had ever had such a notion of God

being not merciful; because they say: God is called the All merciful, and like Him you should always be benign. But they had in view to teach us that mercy as a cardinal virtue in God cannot be compared with that of man. The compassion of the latter is an innate disposition which heaven has bestowed on them; God's mercy, however, is the offspring of his free and independent will. His consummate wisdom induces him to be merciful, and all the biblical laws must be considered as wise and benevolent decrees in regard to us, to accustom us to good manners, and not as though promulgated to show thereby His mercy to the animate beings. For he has allowed to kill them for our use and purpose. The Ramban explains the quoted Talmudical passage in the same way."

And it reads just so in Midrash Rabbah: "Rab taught, that all the biblical laws are promulgated to refine the heart and mind of man."

This is not a captious expression which undermines at once the whole ancient system in all depths, as one modern enemy of ancient Judaism maintains; it merely contains an old principal rule of ancient Judaism. I will prove my assertion.

Admitted the explanation of Rashi, as mentioned above, should be correct, namely: that according to Bar Sebida the mere fulfillment of the biblical laws be our only end and aim, and that we have no right to make an inquiry for any reason, why we have to perform them. Now, I like to know why Bar Abin gives another reason of the statutes contained in the Mishnah? But if we examine this subject closely, we find that it comes admittedly, therefore, because

this teacher (Amora) did not agree with the opinion of Bar Sebida. Hence there are two different views on this point.

It is a common rule that only such laws, statutes or opinions are considered as handed down to us by ancient Judaism which were never disputed. (See the preface to Zeraim by Ramban.) The opinion, however, which is disputed, is merely a private opinion, must be the case with the clause of Bar Sebida; because it was contradicted by his colleague.

Therefore, it was never established as a Halachah or decision, that we dare not assign to the laws, on account of being *geseroth* (decrees,) any reasonable arguments; but on the contrary, the Talmudical authors endeavor always to reason about the arguments of the biblical laws.

Thus Jonathan has, in his version of the Bible, given a reason for the established law in reference to the bird's nest.

You see now that ancient Judaism never taught that the biblical laws are *geseroth*, and that our reason must be subordinated to divine dispensations of destiny, as the radical reformers falsely maintain.

I would and could continue my remarks on this topic, but I think that you have at present a sufficient proof of the chitchat of the modern enemies of our national literature, and are convinced that they do not endeavor to penetrate into the true spirit of the Talmudical system, but confound the truth in every respect.

THE BOOK OF CREATION *

This metaphysical essay, called "Sepher Yezirah" (Book of Creation, or Cosmogony), which I have endeavored to render into English, with explanatory notes, is considered by all modern literati as the first philosophical book that was ever written in the Hebrew language. But the time of its composition and the name of its author have not yet been ascertained, despite the most elaborate researches of renowned archaeologists. Some maintain that this essay is mentioned in the Talmud treatise Sanhedrin, 66b and *ibid.* 67b which passage is according to the commentary of Rashi, to treatise Erubin, 63a, a reliable historical notice. Hence this book was known already in the second or at the beginning of the third century of the Christian Era. The historian, Dr. Graetz, tries to show very ingeniously in his work, entitled "Gnosticism," pp. 104 and 110, that it was written in the early centuries of the Christian Church, especially when the ideas and views of the Gnostics were in vogue. This opinion, however, he afterwards revoked. (See Dr. Graetz's "History of the Jews," Vol. V, p. 315 in a note.)

Dr. Zunz, the Nestor of the Jewish scholars in Europe, maintains that we have to look for the genesis of the book "Yezirah" in the Geonic period, (700—1000), and that it was consequently composed in a post-Talmudical time. But

* Introduction to Kalisch's translation of the "Sepher Yezirah," published in New York, 1877.

if so, it is very strange that Saadiah Gaon, who lived in the tenth, and Judah Halevi, who lived in the twelfth century, represented the book "Yezirah" as a very ancient work. Therefore it seems to me, that Dr. Graetz had no sufficient cause to repudiate his assertion concerning the age of this book; because all the difficulties which he himself and others raised against his supposition, fall to the ground, when we consider that the most ancient works, holy as well as profane, had one and the same fate, namely, that from age to age more or less interpolations were made by copyists and commentators. Compare also Prof. Tenneman's "Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie," improved by Prof. Wendt, p. 207.

Tradition, which ascribes the authorship of this book to the patriarch Abraham, is fabulous, as can be proved by many reasons; but the idea that Rabbi Akiba, who lived about the beginning of the second century, composed the book "Yezirah," is very likely possible. Be this as it may, it is worth while to know the extravagant hypotheses which ancient Jewish philosophers and theologians framed as soon as they began to contemplate and to reason, endeavoring to combine Oriental and Greek theories. Although there is an exuberance of weeds, we will find, nevertheless, many truisms, which are of the greatest importance. A Christian theologian, Johann Friedrich von Meyer, D. D., remarked very truly in his German preface to the book "Yezirah," published in Leipzig, 1830: "This book is for two reasons highly important: in the first place, that the

real Cabala, or mystical doctrine of the Jews, which must be carefully distinguished from its excrescences, is in close connection and perfect accord with the Old and New Testaments; and in the second place, that the knowledge of it is of great importance to the philosophical inquirers, and can not be put aside. Like a cloud permeated by beams of light which makes one infer that there is more light behind it, so do the contents of this book, enveloped in obscurity, abound in coruscations of thought, reveal to the mind that there is a still more effulgent light lurking somewhere, and thus inviting us to a further contemplation and investigation, and at the same time demonstrating the danger of a superficial investigation, which is so prevalent in modern times, rejecting that which can not be understood at first sight."

I shall now try to give a sketch of the system as it is displayed in the book "Yezirah," which forms a link in the chain of the ancient theoretical speculations of philosophers, who were striving to ascertain the truth mainly by reasoning *a priori*, and who imagined that it is thus possible to permeate all the secrets of nature. It teaches that a first cause, eternal, all-wise, almighty and holy, is the origin and the centre of the whole universe, from whom gradually all being emanated. Thought, speech and action are an inseparable unity in the divine being; God made or created, is metaphorically expressed by the word: writing. The Hebrew language and its characters correspond mostly with the things they designate, and thus holy thoughts, Hebrew

language and its reduction to writing, form a unity which produce a creative effect.*

The self-existing first cause called the creation into existence by quantity and quality; the former represented by ten numbers, (Sephiroth,) the latter by twenty-two letters, which form together thirty-two ways of the divine wisdom. Three of the twenty-two letters, namely, Aleph, Mem, Shin, are the mothers, or the first elements, from which came forth the primitive matter of the world: air, water and fire, that have their parallel in man, (male and female): breast, body and head, and in the year: moisture, cold and heat. The other seven double and twelve † simple letters are then represented as stamina, from which other spheres or media of existence emanated.

Man is a microcosm, as the neck separates rationality from vitality, so does diaphragm the vitality from the vegetativeness.

God stands in close connection with the Universe, and

* Thus for instance, they imagined that the name of Jehovah, יהוה is by reversing the alphabet, מַצַּפֵּי (mzpz); mem signifies the letter jod, zaddi, the letter he, and pe, the letter wav. These meaningless sounds, they said, have magic power. Some maintained that the Hebrew language consists of twenty-two consonants, because being the complex of all beings, its number is equal to the most perfect figure, namely, of the periphery, as it is well known that the diameter is always to the periphery as seven to twenty-two.

† It was frequently observed by Jewish and Christian theologians, that the Marcsonian Gnostic system, as well as that of the Clementinians of the second century, contain many analogies and parallels with the book "Yezirah." Marcus divides the Greek alphabet into three parts, namely: nine mute consonants ἀφωνα, eight half vowels ἡμιφωνα and seven vowels ἀφωνήεντα in order to give a clear idea of the peculiar constitution of his "Aeons." (Irenaeus Haer, I, 16.)

just so is Tali connected with the world, that is, an invisible, celestial or universal axis carries the whole fabric. In the year by the sphere, in man by the heart, and thus is the ruling spirit of God everywhere. Notwithstanding the decay of the individual, the genus is produced by the antithesis of man and wife.

Hebrew commentaries on the book "Yezirah" were composed by: first, Saadiah Gaon, of Fajum in Egypt, (892—942); second, Rabbi Abraham ben Daud Halevi; third, Rabbi Moses ben Nachman; fourth, Elieser of Germisa; fifth, Moses Botarel; sixth, Rabbi Elijah Wilna. The book "Yezirah," together with all these commentaries, was published in 1860, in the city of Lemberg. But although the commentator Saadiah was a sober-minded scholar in a superstitious age, a good Hebrew grammarian, a renowned theologian and a good translator of the Hebrew Pentateuch, Isaiah and Job into the Arabian language, his ideas and views were, nevertheless, very often much benighted. See his comments on Yez. Chap. I, etc., etc.; his notes on "Yezirah" Chap. III, 2, prove undoubtedly that he had no knowledge whatever of natural science, and therefore his annotations on the book "Yezirah" are of little or no use at all. All the other commentaries mentioned above, together with all quotations of other expounders of the same book, contain nothing but a medley of arbitrary, mystical explanations and sophistical distortions of scriptural verses, astrological notions, oriental superstitions, a metaphysical jargon, a poor knowledge of physics and not a correct elucidation of the ancient book; they drew mostly from their

own imagination, and credited the author of "Yezirah" with saying very strange things which he never thought of. I must not omit to mention two other Hebrew commentaries, one by Judah Halevi, and the other by Ibn Ezra, who lived in the first part of the twelfth century. They succeeded in explaining the book "Yezirah" in a sound scientific manner, but failed in making themselves generally understood, on account of the superstitious age in which they lived, and the tenacity with which the people in that period adhered to the marvelous and supernatural; they found, therefore, but few followers, and the book "Yezirah" remained to the public an enigma and an ancient curiosity, giving rise to a system of metaphysical delirium, called Cabala.

There is a large number of translations of the book "Yezirah" and comments thereon by learned Christian authors. Most of them, however, are out of print and are rarely found. I was so fortunate as to obtain a copy of Dr. Mayer's edition of the book "Yezirah." He states in the preface to it, that he had a copy of Postellus' translation in manuscript as well as some others, and compared them. The explanatory notes given by this author are, nevertheless, insufficient and sometimes very incorrect. The present translation is, as far as I could ascertain, the first that was ever published in the English language. Again, I have to add that I have not only endeavored to correct a great many mistakes and erroneous ideas of my predecessors, but I have also endeavored to give more complete annotations. I therefore hope that the candid reader will consider the great difficulties I had to overcome in this still

unbeaten path of the ancient Jewish spiritual region, and will receive with indulgence this new contribution to archaeological knowledge.

